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The Editors
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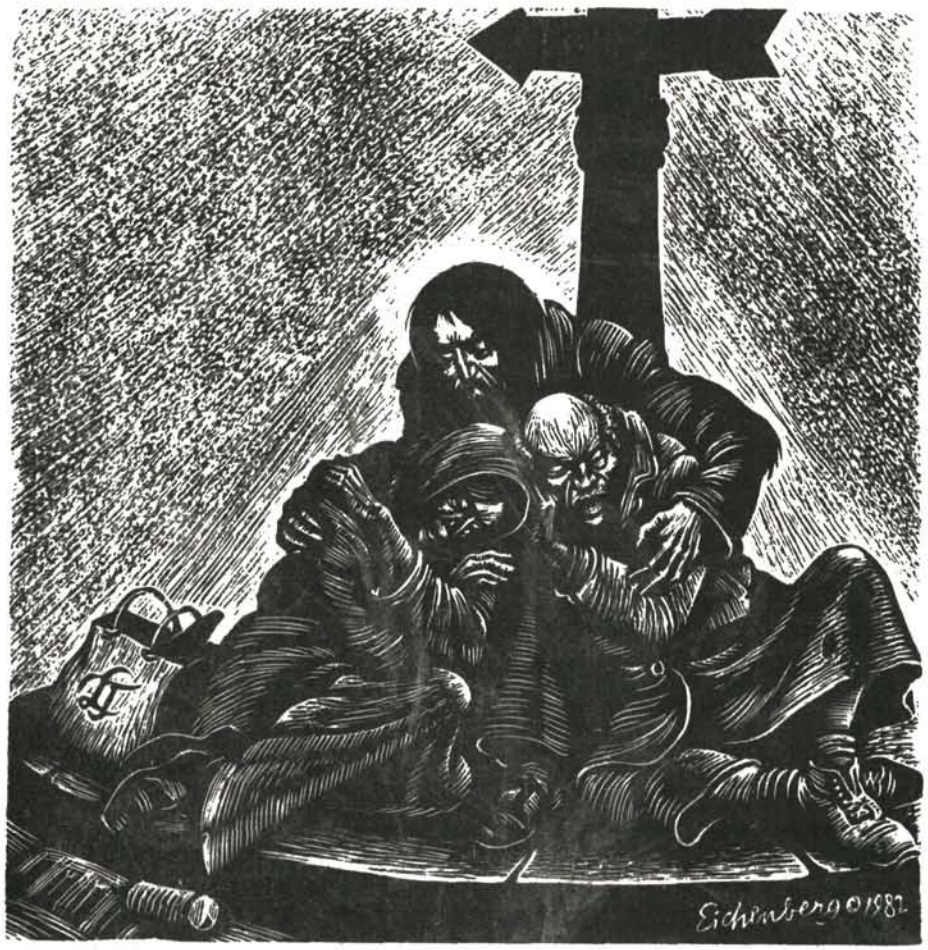

CHRIST OF THE HOMELESS Fritz Eichenberg ©

Motherhood & the women's movement
JANET SCOTT BARLOW

The Bulgarian connection
JANICE A. BROUN

States' rites
JEREMIAH BARUCH

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The work of peace
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Correspondence

Efforts of their own

Albany, N.Y.

To the Editors: I would like to comment on Jean Elshtain's review of Elizabeth Janeway's *Cross Sections* [June 3]. Elshtain and Janeway both miss the point in their opposite responses to the woman who wants "not to be equal, but to be cared for." The point is that not all women are "cared for," and very few women are "cared for" throughout the seventy-odd years of an American woman's life. When I look at my fourteen-year-old daughter, I know that I have no way to assure her being "cared for" for the next sixty years, despite all her friends and dates.

When I tell her to do her Latin or geometry, it is with the hope that this will lead to one or another good college and that when she finishes, she will have an opportunity to use her education in some productive way. Parenting is certainly one such activity, but you cannot apply for a job as a parent in the *New York Times* employment columns or assert your right to be "cared for," because you have a 3.8 cum laude when you get your B.A. The Equal Rights Act means to me that my daughter would be able to feel assured of a comfortable and productive life as a result of doing things within her own control. Like getting good grades and participating in worthwhile extra-curricular activities. She and her friends have already discovered that all the tricks in *Seventeen* will not get a particular boy to call at a particular time. An hour's study, however, will pull a "B+" up to an "A" in history class anytime. What Elshtain calls "the male world of competition and achievement" is actually an easier world in which to get at least reasonable rewards than the intensely competitive world of seeking sexual and marital prizes. As one reaches middle age, one realizes this more keenly. One cannot protect one's children from emotional pain, but one wants to assure them that their own efforts will bring them personal comfort and an opportunity to help and nurture others, whether they are loved or "cared for" in a family situation or not.

SYLVANIA BARNARD

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

CW offshoot

Valparaiso, Ind.

To the Editors: In a letter to the editors Ann Harrigan Makletzoff objects to the statements in my book *Breaking Bread* that Catherine de Hueck's Friendship House movement was an offshoot of the Catholic Worker [July 15].

Although perhaps not generally known, even by adherents of the two movements, it is a fact that de Hueck's efforts began as part of the Catholic Worker. Her original program in Toronto, founded in June, 1934, was actually called Catholic Worker House, with Friendship House as the "local" name. De Hueck at that time considered herself part of Day's movement, and wrote the New York CW for support in establishing her venture.

The Toronto House closed in 1936 because of opposition, and when de Hueck re-established the work in Harlem in 1938 the Catholic Worker connection was broken.

Makletzoff is quite right that Day and De Hueck were each strong individuals with an independent social vision, but it is historically accurate to say that Friendship House began as a branch or offshoot of the Catholic Worker.

MEL PIEHL
Valparaiso University

Catholic rock?

Shelter Island, N.Y.

To the Editors: I was delighted to read Frank McConnell's article, "A Rock Poet—From Fitzgerald to Springsteen," [Aug. 12]. In fact, I wish I had written it, being a Springsteen fan for many years. (After the pope, Springsteen is the person I'd most like to meet! — I hope he reads this.) I also thought of writing an article but thought no Catholic periodical would take a rock singer seriously. Sorry.

The music of Bruce Springsteen is serious and far from superficial. Many of his songs express a deep religious searching, a restless yearning for God. If any rock and roll musician is specifically "Catholic," Springsteen is. His roots are there. His music expresses the many broken hopes and dreams of working-class people. The imagery of his song "Factory" captures the pain in the so-called American dream. This is my father's song, I imagine Springsteen's father's too. The song many people have sung.

No songwriter portrays a sense of American Catholicism, the feelings of its young people, as Springsteen does. If we can talk of "Catholic rock and roll" this is the closest we've come. A Bruce Springsteen concert is always a celebration of promises and disappointments, the struggles and joys of our journey. There's humor in Springsteen's music too, I think. The New Jersey Turnpike is infrequently considered to have cosmic dimensions! (His is an incarnational spirituality.)

Giving retreats to young people I've come to see that Springsteen does articulate for many a search for (religious) meaning and identity — seeking a father, trying to find roots in this sad, but hope-filled "promised land."

Bruce Springsteen (and his music) shares a little light with us. I wonder if he knows that his journey in the "darkness" is itself a path to Light. It surely will be if his songs continue to be written with the

(Continued on page 508)

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THE LESSONS OF FLIGHT 007

ON SEPTEMBER 1, the Soviet military, in order to enforce its notions of national security, deliberately executed 269 civilian travelers on Korean Airlines flight 007. Those victims, we know, are but a few of the thousands upon thousands of innocent lives sacrificed every month, in all corners of the globe, on the altars of national security and ideological fervor. But that terrible fact should not lessen our horror at the destruction of the Korean airplane and its passengers. There are certain assaults on human life so sudden, concentrated, and remorseless that even a world grown accustomed to daily accounts of bloodshed gasps. For weeks after an event like this — perhaps the last one was the massacre of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps by Lebanese Phalangists — we preoccupy ourselves with the questions *how* and *why* and *what now*.

Our answers to those questions should be as precise and sober as we can make them. It does no service to the dead or honor to their memory to engage in national catharsis or translate this loss into political maneuvering. So far the most popular response to the shooting down of flight 007 has been President Reagan's. The Soviet's "barbaric act," he said, revealed the true face of totalitarianism — in effect, that it was the "evil empire" and the tireless purveyor of lies he had previously made it out to be. Besides immediate demands for an apology, compensation to the victims' families, and Soviet compliance with standard international aviation procedures, the president implied that the most appropriate countermeasures were more support for his administration's arms buildup, in particular the MX missile. The media quickly became so insistent that the Russian action had undercut resistance to the MX, the Euromissiles, and Reagan's tough line in Central America, that even if that were not so at first, it soon would be.

The strongest criticism of this position has come from the right, where the president is denounced for speaking loudly and carrying a small stick. Centrist and liberal criticism has been muted, partly out of relief that the administration launched no precipitous initiatives which at worst could have moved the world closer to war and at best might have provoked another demoralizing contretemps with our European allies. But part of the liberal and centrist reticence has been due to the undeniable measure of truth in the president's words. The lessons Mr. Reagan would have us learn about the Soviet regime, however, were both more and less than the event revealed.

We did not learn, for example, that the Soviet regime was ruthless and rigid and no respecter of human life from this action over Sakhalin. We knew that before. Last month not only marked the third anniversary of Solidarity's suppressed struggle; it was the fifteenth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact's descent on Czechoslovakia's brave effort at "socialism with a human face." Firing on a plane intruding over highly sensitive airspace seems almost like a positively mild

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expression of concern for "sacred borders" when compared to sending a force of 60-100,000 to cement a Soviet puppet along the USSR's southern flank by strafing villages and burning people alive. While the military dictates that brought down flight 007 callously departed from the policies of other nations, including American forebearance toward wandering Soviet bloc airliners, enough uncertainties remain about this incident to make it a relatively blurry lens for examining the Soviet reality. Yes, there are some in the anti-nuclear movements in Europe and the U.S. who really want to believe that the Soviets are nothing more than underdogs trying to fend off a bullying U.S.; perhaps they will learn something from the 007 affair and not consider it just a case of unfortunate Kremlin public relations. But such people are not the serious core of dissent from the Reagan hard line, nor have they ever been representative of either Western opinion or policy.

That is why a commentator like George F. Will entirely misses the central point when he argues that no one should be startled "when the Soviet regime acts in character." "The shocking thing," he writes, "is how shocked people are." But most of us are not shocked by some sudden discovery that Moscow is willing to sacrifice innocent lives in pursuit of its interests. (We, too, are all-too-willing to do that.) The greatest shock lies in Moscow's willingness to sacrifice innocent lives in ways that are, to every appearance, *not in its interests at all*. People like Will are forced to construe some Machiavellian purpose to the Soviet deed, in his case that the essential note of the Russian regime is intimidation and "the benefits are clear enough (the benefits of intimidation, especially of Japan)." But no one has in fact been intimidated, except possibly any pilots tempted to take shortcuts across Soviet airspace or be careless in their navigation. Opposition to Kremlin policy has been stiffened in both Japan and Europe, as any Machiavellian might have foreseen. The reductio ad absurdum of this search for a "rational" Russian objective is the theory that the Kremlin was out to get Birchite Congressman Larry McDonald.

And Moscow's attempt to justify itself was of a piece with the original crime. The Russians can be skillful dissimulators. In this case they were only inept ones. Certainly Moscow's response to the world's outcry revealed harsh truths about its system. Democratic nations including our own sometimes prize national security higher than innocent life, but public review provides a check — sometimes, alas, more potential than effective — on gross abuses. Witness the contrasting Israeli and Lebanese reactions to the Beirut massacre. Moscow, of course, outdid the Lebanese in not only avoiding responsibility but transforming an atrocity into a patriotic duty. Still, the straggling parade of vague and contradictory Russian explanations displayed anything but a relentlessly efficient, united government machine.

The destruction of flight 007 showed the Soviet Union to be contemptuous of humane norms, but it also showed the Soviet Union to be rigid, defensive, unsteady, fallible, and fragmented in its leadership, if not even divided by Byzantine conspiracies. Hawks like Mr. Will and, despite his current measure of restraint, the president must deemphasize these non-Machiavellian, non-purposeful aspects of the Soviet "evil empire" because, ironically, their own policy of meeting intimidation with almost nothing but counter-intimidation *actually depends on the Soviets being superbly rational in calculating their national interest*. For our part, we believe that the evil of the Soviet system is multi-dimensional, that it includes aggressiveness *and* defensiveness; ruthless pursuit of power *and* bumbling, counter-productive bureaucratic rigidity; the "natural selection" of cold-blooded leadership *and* the installation of fearful, shortsighted mediocrities. That is why America's Soviet policy must be equally multi-dimensional, consisting neither of unilateral reliance on Kremlin benevolence nor of this administration's single-note quest for more armed power. Not only the USSR and the United States, after all, but the entire planet carries a lot of innocent passengers.

HOMOSEXUAL LOVE

Homosexuality is a condition that affects roughly five percent of the total U.S. population, that is, some ten or more million people, or perhaps one hundred persons in an average parish of one thousand families. Such figures suggest it's unlikely to become the reigning social, much less a moral ideal, for us. In 1973, Ernest Becker's *The Denial of Death* could confidently describe the social science view of homosexuality as a "problem of ineptness, vague identity, passivity, helplessness — all in all, an inability to take a powerful stance toward life." But he was uncharacteristically overconfident in that assessment. For in the same year the trustees of the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders; it was henceforth labeled a "sexual disorientation disturbance" requiring treatment only when the concerned individual was actually disturbed by it. In a badly split vote, with over a third of the membership abstaining, the APA's membership confirmed the trustees' decision. Since then there's been research, questioned for ideological bias in some quarters, which claims that homosexuals are no more prone to personality defects than heterosexuals. And so it goes. There is much about homosexuality we simply don't know. Like the mysterious disease AIDS itself, the origins of homosexuality remain in dispute. And generalizations about homosexual behavior are about as hard to come by as they are for heterosexuals.

Of course the furor over AIDS has led us to ponder again the subject of homosexuality, as has a recent exhortation to American bishops by the pope. Can soul, real spirit, be breathed into homosexual love — a love that is not procreative? For many gay and lesbian Catholics, that question is answered affirmatively, but for many others in the church it's still a vexing one. This is so even when common nonsense about gays is dispelled — stereotypes of child molesting (which proportionately marks heterosexuals more than homosexuals), effeminacy, or "butchness"; images of promiscuity that go far beyond what homosexuals have pointed to as a real problem in their sexual world; delusions that homosexuality can simply be transformed into heterosexuality by sufficient will power. It is true

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that in recent years homosexuals in the church are no longer regarded as an abhorred pariah class, and pastoral guidelines encourage confessors to be compassionate and encouraging. Where open prejudice once held sway, there's now a degree of tolerance. Such tolerance is a real gain, although it can also slide into a complacent and patronizing refusal to listen further to the voices of gay Catholics or to calls for a more thoroughgoing reconsideration of the church's official teaching, which still radically denies that theological virtues can be infused into homosexual relationships in any way parallel to the case with heterosexual bonding.

Perhaps recognizing, however, that the critical test of authentic Christianity lies in the justice and charity owed socially stigmatized groups, increasing numbers of American bishops have supported the work of Dignity and reasonable civil rights legislation in behalf of homosexuals — with a few scandalously notable exceptions. But generally, episcopal voices have not followed the line of the 1977 study of sexual ethics commissioned by the American Catholic Theological Society of America which sought to eliminate the double moral standard between homosexuals and heterosexuals. "Homosexuals," said that report, "have the same rights to love, intimacy, and relationships as heterosexuals. . . (T)hey are also bound to strive for the same ideals in their relationships . . ." This proposal also went too far for many leading moral theologians; indeed, even some who accepted a number of the report's specific conclusions questioned its underlying assumptions and methodology. As with the psychiatrists, then, opinion is divided, but the preponderant view backs heterosexual marriage as the normative context of genitality — the context in which, as Georgetown's Father Richard McCormick puts it, human love has the fullest chance of thriving. By this reasoning, procreative love is the norm; thus intimate sexual expression among homosexuals continues to be regarded as deficient, "essentially imperfect." And hence the condition for a homosexual's full participation in the church must be that of a vowed celibate's asceticism. That the church should, in effect, ask moral heroism of homosexuals as a consequence of a choice they never made is one thing; that the church should unqualifiedly demand it strikes many as unfair.

The controversy over the morality of sexual intimacy between members of the same sex is only a publicly dramatic part of the debate and uncertainty about sexual morality generally. That is what makes it so threatening, on the one hand. But that is also why individuals aware of the suffering inflicted on homosexuals by social and religious prohibitions may nonetheless hesitate to endorse the full panoply of changes proposed by gay activists. Some injustices may be so readily recognized and repaired that immediate action is called for. But other matters raise questions large enough about society and sexuality — heterosexuality far more than homosexuality — that the evolutionary operation of extended discussion and reflection seems appropriate. What is called for cannot be provided in the space of an editorial, nor can it be provided, we regret to say, by simple reaffirmations of traditional teaching by Rome. For the moment, then, we restrict ourselves to a comment only, and an indirect one at that.

Alice Walker's fiction rings roundly true — and powerfully wise. So much did these qualities strike two of the leading arbiters of American art that last year they awarded her novel, *The Color Purple,* the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award. Told in the form of letters to God ("You better not never tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy.") and to a lost sister, it was the story of the awakening of a poor, uneducated Southern black woman, Miss Celie, who didn't know how to fight, only passively survive. The only real love Celie ever knows through most of the tale comes from other women, first from her sister Nettie for whom she sacrifices herself, and then, remarkably enough, through a lesbian relationship with her husband's lover, a jazz singer named Shug Avery. And it's the latter connection that's truly transforming, life-giving.

Is this Goethe's art of transforming truth into poetry? To be more specific, is it not a case of soul and spirit being quickened through a homosexual love which embodies those virtues of care, fidelity, and sacrificial love the Bible tends to associate exclusively with heterosexual marriage? Can homosexual love be a source of grace? Alice Walker's fiction suggests the answer is — sometimes — yes. A "sometimes" which the candid experience of Christian lay people reveals as also applying to heterosexual marriages. We do not pretend that this insight resolves the larger questions — only that progress in resolving the larger questions will not be made without this insight.

Washington report

STATES' RITES

THE NEW FEDERALISM VIA BUDGET CUTS

EVERY PRESIDENT has had a theme, scheme, or dream to cope with the conflicts between the states and the federal government: Teddy Roosevelt had "New Nationalism"; Lyndon Johnson, "Creative Federalism"; Richard Nixon, "New Federalism"; Jimmy Carter, "New Partnership"; and Ronald Reagan (once again), "New Federalism." But Ronald Reagan had something else besides a retreaded label — he had the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981.

Many press accounts have dismissed Reagan's New Federalism as "bogged down," "dead in the water," or suffering "total oblivion." Apparently they have not seen the recent studies demonstrating the inherent capacity of the 1981 budget act to advance three main elements of Ronald Reagan's New Federalism: (1) the reduction of the federal government's involvement in domestic affairs and spending; (2) the devolu-

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tion of power from Washington to the states; and (3) the reform of the federal role in welfare.

Fourteen years ago, when President Richard Nixon advanced his New Federalism in August 1969, he certainly sounded like our present leader. Nixon claimed his proposals "represent the first major reversal of the trend toward ever more centralization of government in Washington, D.C. After . . . power flowing from the people and the states to Washington, it is time for a New Federalism in which power, funds, and responsibility will flow from Washington to the states and to the people."

Mr. Nixon's phrasing seems to have provided a somewhat worn label for Mr. Reagan's vision of reordering the relationship between the states and the federal government. But hasn't Reagan's "new" New Federalism gone the way of the "old" into the dusty federalism files of previous presidential phrasemakers?

It may be gone all right, but only because Reagan has substantially fulfilled Nixon's (and much of his own) goal of a New Federalism. Well, at least power and responsibility have flowed back to the states — but not the funds. This is becoming increasingly apparent as the full implications of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 begin to fall upon states already burdened with the blessings of Reagan's 1981 tax cuts. Some of these consequences have caught recent national attention — just take a look at the recent gridlock in the California legislature's budget snarl with Gov. George Deukmejian. California's problems have been repeated in most states — but with less flair.

Near the end of the states' fiscal year, July 1, the National Governors' Association chairman, Utah Gov. Scott M. Matheson, reported: "The states have absolutely used up their traditional surpluses; many are in deficit, most are barely getting by." Now that the 1984 fiscal year has begun, a state survey reveals that in order to balance their budgets forty-one states have had spending cuts (this on top of cutbacks in at least half the states in FY 1982); 22 states had to lay off workers; 40 states have instituted or continued hiring freezes; and 37 states have passed tax increases.

The nation's states had ended their 1982 fiscal year facing the "worst fiscal crises since [the] Depression," according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. And now the states' governors and budget officers are calling the current state fiscal condition "the bleakest ever." Reagan's federal 1981 tax cuts, ironically labeled the Economic Recovery Tax Act, have been estimated by the state legislators to reduce state revenue receipts by nearly $5 billion by 1986. Although the ostensible purpose of the 1981 cuts was to provide more disposable income for the states to tap, the 1982 federal tax increases have severely diluted the possible impact of the cuts (the 1982 measure also put some clamps on the ability of state and local governments to aid businesses by covering some of their costs with tax-exempt industrial revenue bonds). Moreover, in search for ways to reduce the nation's incredible deficit without a tax increase, the administration is pushing hard for measures which Congress is seriously considering that would close other revenue doors for the states. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that industrial bonds, mortgage bonds, and "private purpose" bonds — widely used by state and local governments — will cost the federal treasury $13 billion over the next five years; OMB cites state and local tax deductibility as costing $28.8 billion in fiscal 1983 alone. Obviously, legislation that would prevent these losses to the federal till will simultaneously make it harder for local governments to raise money through bonds or taxes. The administration has also targeted the tax savings created by the leasing arrangements of the 1986 accelerated cost recovery system which allows state and local governments to sell public facilities to businesses and then to lease them back (estimated by some to involve $2 trillion in property and equipment).

The administration's possible further closing of revenue sources comes at a time when most possible tax options have been considered by the states, with the sales tax leading the parade (either by raising the rate or broadening the base) and the personal income tax close behind; but others under consideration are taxes on gasoline, corporate income, cigarettes and alcoholic beverages, and severance taxes. Of course, much of this fiscal portrait has been shaped by the recession, causing repeated shortfalls in every state's revenue projections within the last three years; taxes have been increased in all but five states and two of those may yet do so this year.

With the onslaught of the recession, Reagan budget cuts could hardly have come at a worse time for the states' fiscal status. A full third of the $36 billion in fiscal 1982 federal reductions came directly from that thirteen percent of the budget providing grants to states and localities. Moreover, a large portion of the additional $24 billion cuts had reduced transfer payments to individuals — payments which the states were called upon to replace. The disastrous fiscal consequences of the 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act for the states were not unforeseen. In December 1981, Merrill Lynch stated that "the planned Reagan administration cutbacks in federal expenditures bear the greatest challenge to the credit standings of certain state/local governments and the market for tax-exempt securities since the Great Depression."

President Reagan's budget tax reductions are the culmination of a trend that has been developing since the mid-1970s, the first landmark being the New York City fiscal crisis, which had a sobering impact on cities' spending across the country. The second turning point was the passage of California's Proposition 13 in 1978. There wasn't a statehouse that did not feel the repercussions of this movement—resulting in state spending cuts and reduced services, and in a number of responsibilities being returned to the localities notwithstanding their own retrenchments.

The conduct of domestic public policy was being changed on the federal level as well, with the advent of the Reagan administration's budget buzz saw. Groups lobbying Congress and the administration have now adopted the tactics that their state counterparts have followed for several years; namely, they have been successful if they have prevented major cuts in their programs rather than looking to any growth.

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The 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act also had a second major consequence — decentralization of power to the states. Fifty-four categorical programs, many of which provided monies directly to localities and non-profit organizations, were combined into nine "block grants" and given to the states to administer. Here Reagan's approach to federalism differed significantly from that of President Nixon, even beyond offering cuts to the states rather than sweetening their appetite for responsibility with more money, as Nixon had proposed. Reagan's devolution of power has gone *only* to the states — not to localities. Nixon, and Gerald Ford as well, proposed block grants to both states and local governments — in fact, mostly to the latter. Although the programs transferred to the states were cut by twenty-five percent under the two preceding GOP presidents, the full impact was postponed until now because of double funding during the transition from categorical programs to block grants and because of carry-over funds from previous years. A Princeton University study on the effect of Reagan's federal budget changes on state and local governments, led by Richard Nathan and Fred Doolittle, reveals that although the full impact of the block grants has yet to be seen, the cost appears to fall on the poor — particularly the working poor.

By changing the rules of programs, not just funding amounts, the 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act has fundamentally altered welfare programs to emphasize work and workfare. This third major change arising from the 1981 Act, as noted by the study, constitutes a more profound shift than many have realized. It has prompted Richard Nathan to say that the 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act "was as important a single piece of social legislation as the 1935 Social Security Act in that it marked a turning away from the national government's building up of programs to aid the poor."

This view is reenforced by a state survey of Reagan's FY 1982 program implementation, conducted by the Center for Law and Social Policy. This survey found that the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act imposed AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) eligibility restrictions which largely affected working poor women. It discovered that a significant number of female-headed working poor households lost not only AFDC, but also Medicaid, food stamps, and childcare benefits. Survey respondents stated that it was of little import to the daily lives of the poor whether the programs were state or federally run. Some even felt that a good state-run program might be more responsive; but all agreed that lack of funds was the crucial factor to date: "The ultimate question is whether any government — state, local, or federal — is willing to put money into human services. In FY 1982, very few were inclined to do so."

Mr. Reagan's New Federalism also contrasts with the older version in that Mr. Nixon held that welfare should be a national responsibility. A major factor in last year's highly publicized breakdown in New Federalism negotiations with state and local groups was Reagan's refusal to accept federal responsibility for welfare.

But with the welfare changes that have already occurred, the severe cutbacks, and the devolution of power to the states — all consequences of the 1981 budget act — Mr. Reagan will not have to attempt to reconstruct a national welfare policy (as Nixon did in his family assistance plan). Reagan's New Federalism accepts — even welcomes — state differences in welfare support as an appropriate policy basis. If you will recall, when asked how he proposed to deal with the status of the poor, he responded that citizens have a right "to vote with their feet" by moving. The inherent disparity in revenue capacity among the states, with some having large populations and others, extensive mineral or similar resources, is exacerbated by economic competition.

Michigan budget analyst Diane C. Emling has observed that tax cuts, subsidies, abatements, and other incentives to induce the establishment of businesses, to foster a state "industrial policy," and to attract the middle class have become the operating policy of many statehouses. At the same time, she points out, under the premise that "high benefit" centers attract the poor, states are developing protectionist attitudes — especially poignant in those older industrial states that used to take pride in their humanitarian treatment of the poor.

With all states looking to their neighbors to seduce job-creating industry and dump the financially burdensome poor, a downward spiral may be generated among the states until Mr. Reagan's *New* Federalism looks like a very *old* Federalism. Concern for the poor may again have to fall behind, as it has before in our history, to demonstrate anew that the needs of the nation's poor exceed the responsive capacity of private charity, and of towns and cities, of counties, and yes, even of the states.

JEREMIAH BARUCH

(Jeremiah Baruch is the pseudonym of a Washington writer with a position in government.)

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Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

A WORK OF PEACE

THE LESSONS OF AN UNREMEMBERED TREATY

THIS MONTH — September — marks the two hundredth anniversary of the Treaty of Paris, a bicentennial every bit as important to us as that of the Declaration of Independence, but, alas, far less familiar. Like most of humanity we are much better at celebrating wars, their endings and their beginnings, than we are at celebrating peace.

The Treaty of Paris admitted us to the family of nations. It ensured that we would be a great continental nation rather than a narrow federation of former colonies hugging the eastern seaboard. Yet even after almost three-quarters of a year of observances American faces tend to go a little blank at mention of it. We have forgotten, or have never known, that Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and John Adams spent four long years negotiating it. To Benjamin Franklin it was the crowning work of his life.

"We were long fellow laborers in the best of all works — the work of peace," he wrote to David Hartley, the British negotiator. Adams hailed "the returning friendship" between Great Britain and America, and Hartley called the signing "the reunion of all our ancient affections and common interests."

"Where today are the Treaties of Utrecht of 1713, of Paris of 1763, of Hubertusburg of the same year, or of Kuchuk Kainarji of 1774?" writes historian Richard B. Morris. "They are all ghosts of a vanished past, along with the empires of the Spaniards, the Dutch, the French, the Turkish, and the British."

Not so the British-American Treaty of 1783. "While the map of Europe has been altered beyond recognition . . . the present northern and southern boundaries of the continental United States remain essentially the same as a direct result of the negotiators' foresight" (Morris, *The Peacemakers: The Great Powers and American Independence*, Northeastern University Press, 1983). Because by the treaty the United States secured boundaries exceeding those of any republic "since the days of Rome," Morris argues, our country entered a period of unparalleled creativity, admitting states, not colonies, and forming a republic "so spacious" that it required a unique kind of federalism — thus bringing about the invention of those marvels of statecraft, the Northwest Ordinance and the Federal Constitution, which, without the treaty, would have been meaningless. Surely a treaty worth celebrating!

Nevertheless the treaty might have gone unremarked in any significant way had it not been for the strenuous efforts of one woman — historian Dr. Joan Ridder Challinor. True, some British entrepreneurs in collaboration with their American counterparts took advantage of the date to plan a "Britain Salutes New York" festival to showcase British products and British artists and performers. But no national observance was envisioned, no national proclamation of celebration planned, until Joan Challinor decided that, if no one else thought the work of peace important, she did. She set about forming a committee to coordinate whatever scattered commemorations of the treaty were going on, and to stimulate others.

Eventually the committee enlisted many prominent Americans — as well as the Queen of England and the president of the United States as honorary chairmen — but the initial work was mostly done by or with the inspiration of Dr. Challinor. A logo was designed and offered for the use of those sponsoring separate observances in places as varied as San Francisco and New Haven, Clayton, New York, and Springfield, Illinois. A poster was designed showing the original treaty atop the Sheraton desk on which it was signed; replicas of the first printed copy of the treaty and of Buell map of 1784 showing the new American boundaries were printed for distribution; a facsimile of the original handwritten treaty was made available. The National Symphony agreed to a free concert on the lawn of the Capitol in Washington at which would be played a new American work "A Fanfare for Peace" by Stephen D. Burton which had been commissioned by the Committee. (Perhaps most original of all was the concept of the Treaty of Paris balloon to commemorate man's first flight, the bicentennial of which — Montgolfier's balloon ascent — coincided with that of the treaty, thus creating a bond between two testimonies to the achievements possible to the human spirit.)

A film is being produced by the Smithsonian. The National Endowment is funding the distribution of educational materials for the nation's school children. A Mass in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris marks the signing; memorial gates bearing the Treaty of Paris logo are being installed at the entrance to London's Grosvenor Square—all this and much more are the result of one person's determination to celebrate the arts of peace-making.

All this would be of only passing interest if it were not that focusing on the Treaty of Paris and the way in which peace was attained by it has important and suggestive analogies to contemporary international problems. King George III's obstinate stand in refusing to recognize the insurgent Americans, says historian Morris, was very like our own long years of refusal to deal directly with the Viet Cong. Our choices as a concerned third party between established governments and rebels in Central America, and "a plethora of Middle Eastern issues" involving recognition also invite analogy. We stand in need of peacemakers as independent in judgment, as skilled in diplomatic maneuvering, as dedicated to the true national interest as were Adams, Jay, and Franklin. Perhaps that is why the powers that be had to be prodded a little before they joined in the national invitation to the study of the treaty and the work — the hard, wearying work — which must go into the making of peace.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

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WHY SO MANY HAVE KEPT THEIR DISTANCE

Motherhood & the women's movement

JANET SCOTT BARLOW

MY FIRST CHILD and my first real awareness of the women's movement arrived together in 1970. Since then, I have followed my nature, my needs, and my early personal commitment, and have remained a fulltime mother. "Fulltime" meaning all the work, all the care, all the time (with help from my husband after his day at *his* fulltime job). Fulltime in spite of the fact that my household could have used a second income. Fulltime because I thought I could be a "complete" person and raise my children at the same time.

And now, twelve years later, two facts are obvious to me. The first is that most mothers know more than anyone else about the nature of love and duty, the conflict of love and guilt, the mixed bag of surprise rewards and unforeseen heartaches and the endless ways in which a complex job can fulfill and deplete at the same time. The second fact is that the Equal Rights Amendment has not been ratified.

If the leaders of the women's movement see no connection between these two facts, then their days of impact are behind them. For while feminists advised mothers and prodded mothers and supported mothers politically, they never *embraced* mothers. The ERA is dead today partly because of this failure. I say this as a fulltime mother who needed embracing, one who would have returned the embrace had they made the first move, with honesty. The first move was theirs to make; and because the stakes were so high all round, the honesty was vital.

During the early, highly vocal years of the women's movement, mothers who chose to stay home with their children were used as negative symbols, a point of departure. Fulltime motherhood was characterized as confining, relentless, nerve-stripping and mind-deadening — all of which was partly true, some of the time. Left untouched was the fact that amidst the confinement and relentlessness and stripped nerves and deadened minds were large nuggets of genuine reward and satisfaction found nowhere else in life. Totally ignored was the fact a woman who can help to instill in her growing children compassion and courage and honor and humor, while also managing housework and homework and carpools and illness, and do it all day, everyday, year after year, is a woman who *knows* something. Things being what they are, she is also a woman who needs to be *told* that she knows something.

If enough people do a difficult job at the same time, the fact that the job is commonplace will completely overshadow the skills required to do it well. This had long been the case (and still is) of women who were mothers. Mothers needed to hear aloud a truth that existed in their own minds and hearts, but seemed to exist few other places: that the commonplace work of raising children had value — not dollar value, but social value, personal value, moral value. They looked to the women's movement to speak this truth for them, and they looked in vain.

WOMEN WITH CHILDREN provided the movement, at a crucial point in its progress, with the possibility of a mutually beneficial exchange. Mothers offered the women's movement insight into ways of doing a difficult and rewarding job while maintaining sanity and perspective and humor. The movement offered mothers the possibility of vocal public validation of worthy work done with skill. But for a nonworking mother to have felt an attachment and commitment to the women's movement, she would first have had to hear that she was right to follow her choice, was free not to act as a symbol, free not to represent a cause.

While the women's movement was asking much *of* women in the way of self-examination, commitment, and courage to change, and doing much *for* women in the way of political and social advancement, it wasn't offering much *to* women in the way of understanding and acceptance of lives already chosen, already being lived. The women who believed in the basic feminist issues of equal opportunity, equal pay, and the right to be treated as full citizens and whole persons, but *dis*believed in change for its own sake, were conveniently ignored by the

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movement because their beliefs complicated efficient, streamlined issues. And the women who hoped for progress, but did not see motherhood as an *idea* or their lives as public causes or themselves as angry victims, felt the parade passing them by completely.

But they waited anyway for some word to filter back, and when it did it was a corker: Give dolls to your sons. And that wasn't all. Women were told to monitor their children's play roles and toys, make sure their sex lives were fifty-fifty, divide housework evenly with their husbands, find their Selves, know their Selves, fulfill their Selves and assert their Selves. The irony of it! The movement offered most women, in the guise of guidance and support, more ceaseless expectations, more ways to fail, and — Oh, my God — more potential guilt. It was time to worry when your son chose trucks over dolls and your daughter dressed as a nurse on Halloween.

In the process, and because it suited their ends, movement leaders gave voice to an important but deceptive fact: raising children can be painful. This was important because it was true, but deceptive because it omitted the fact that preceded and created it: women (and men, too) love their children mightily. If women did not love their children so dearly, the job of raising them would not be so difficult. If women did not love their children so fully, they could make quick work of guilt and anxiety and choices and options.

The leaders of the women's movement exploited the love mothers feel for their children without ever acknowledging it. This wasn't the only fact they exploited whose source they failed to credit. They took a straight-line shortcut toward a worthy goal, lacking the courage to see that in human problems the shortest distance between two points is rarely a straight line. They took the expedient course, with power and politics as their guides, and the result was predictable. Thoughtful people who supported the basic ideas of a movement whose time had come found themselves rejecting leaders whose methods and rhetoric dishonored the validity of their own issues and the courage it took to raise those issues. To remain fully committed to the women's movement, one constantly had to remember the saying that "an idea is not responsible for the people who believe in it." All things considered, this was a feat of effort and detachment few people were inclined to attempt — especially nonworking mothers who had been, in effect, rejected by the movement as insufficiently symbolic.

The questions raised during the seventies were, to a large extent, human questions. The trouble started when those questions were given purely political answers. The trouble continued when women were expected to identify themselves incessantly *as women*. It was a time — and this was nothing new — when women (and men, too) got up one morning to find themselves married to the wrong person for the wrong reasons; a time when people found themselves either parents or nonparents because it was The Thing To Do; a time when women were bewildered and angered by the consequences of situations not chosen but merely accepted. The dirty trick was not in examining this condition; it was in telling such people that the responsibility for the problem and the source of the solution were somewhere outside themselves, could be sought through political movements or social causes.

It was a time of roles. And women who didn't have roles but only lives knew that the question was not simply justice, it was life. And responses to life were not to be found in easy slogans and forced symbols and convenient roles. People may find solace in the fact that their problems are not unique, but they can find no answers there. Despair is personal business no matter how many people feel it at once.

But it was also a time — nothing new here either — when women and men took responsibility for their own lives, and made choices that involved trade-offs with the wisdom not to label every exchange a "sacrifice." These were people who understood that nobody can Have It All, but it's every person's right to try so long as he doesn't whine about the burdens of the effort. These were people who chose to give, often at their own expense (since this is the true nature of giving), because it deepened and enriched their lives.

For this well-earned maturity and honorably gained insight, women were told by the movement that they were suppressing their Selves and living through their children. They knew it was a lie. So when, inevitably, Having It All hit the fan in public, when women with careers and homes and husbands and children and Selves finally cried out, "Hold it! This is tough. I'm tired and overworked and guilty," the other women — the ones who had made some peace with the fact that all worthwhile human endeavor has a cost — smiled slightly and turned away. No ally there. And when stories began to appear in print of thirty-five-year-old women who had for years confidently but casually declined motherhood like a piece of chewing gum, and were now either overcome with the need to reproduce and nurture and love, or all giddy with discovery after having babies, the other women — the ones who had long understood that a woman's body is indeed a *female* place — didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

The condition of motherhood is one of life's ultimate inescapable facts. The essence of being a mother is a woman's awareness that for as long as she lives, she will be bound to her children by her own intimate love and concern and hope. Some of the byproducts of this awareness are human insight, philosophical and psychological resilience, and the instinct to know what's important and what isn't.

And one of the byproducts of living an "ordinary" life is that one has time for only so much sightseeing. So after women had wandered off for a while to see Boys And Girls Are Alike — They Just Look Different, and had gone a little farther to check out Sexual Politics and Finding Yourself, they finally said, "Aw, the hell with it. Nothing much here. I'm going home." But they turned back with regret because they had hoped to view something grand. If feminists are trying to analyze the failure of the ERA, they might look back to the moment when millions of women grew tired of sightseeing and headed for home.

This is not to say that the women's movement has had no impact. One of the many ironies of the movement is that it has

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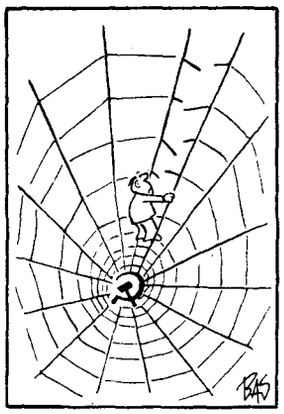
made a huge difference without gaining both a huge *and* committed following — a fact that illustrates simultaneously the legitimacy of its basic issues and the foolish elitism of its methods. From morning till dark, women of all ages and stations live different lives, better lives, because the women's movement exists. But this fact has not made large numbers of women grateful converts to feminism. Most women have accepted this state of affairs as they would accept a surprise inheritance from a snooty relative: glad to have it, but facts are facts.

If we can believe what we read, the women's movement is in a time of transition, reorganization, and re-evaluation. Its leaders are making plans for a more systematic political approach, an approach in which *every* woman counts because *every* woman represents a potential vote. I wish them luck; I'll be watching with interest. From a distance.



HOW CHRISTIANITY SURVIVES

The Bulgarian connection

JANICE A. BROUN

AS THE COMPLEXITIES of the "Bulgarian Connection" were explored, one of the least challenged hypotheses was that the Bulgarian Secret Service might be utilized by the USSR to provide cover for its own involvement in the attempt to assassinate Pope John Paul II. This is not in the least surprising, for the Bulgarian police are ruthless and efficient. In 1978, for instance Bulgarian émigré Georgi Markov, a BBC broadcaster and satirist living in London, died after a jab from a poisoned umbrella. Furthermore, no Eastern bloc state is more closely tied to the USSR, or a more reliable ally.

The reasons for this are largely historical. In the nineteenth century, during Bulgaria's struggle for independence from Turkish rule, it was to Russia that its citizens turned for help; they shared similar languages and scripts, and were both Orthodox in faith. Thus when at the end of the Second World War, Russian troops helped local revolutionary forces to seize power and set up a Communist regime, they didn't have to face the same opposition they met elsewhere. Subsequently the gratitude of ordinary Bulgarians quickly evaporated in horror and disillusionment as they experienced excesses as bad as any in Eastern Europe and realized that they had lost the independence gained in 1908.

Their leaders, however, have maintained a close, loyal relationship with the Soviet Union, and co-operation in a "security operation" would entail no ministerial discussions, but merely a direct order from Moscow. Their subservience has brought material benefits to their people in the form of Soviet cash, making Bulgaria one of the more prosperous Eastern bloc countries. This is one of the reasons why there has been no organized movements for human rights or religious freedom to cause the government concern or attract unwelcome attention in Western media, though a more compelling reason is the security police's tight control, exercised through intense surveillance and the memory of past terror. Dissent surfaced only very briefly in 1978 with one solitary human rights manifesto.

The Vatican has no illusions about Bulgaria. Nevertheless, to account for its silence over the whole affair, we have to look at the overall religious situation there, and then focus more closely on the particular situation of the small Catholic community.

To understand the religious situation is impossible without reference to Bulgaria's five centuries under Turkish rule. This had positive and negative results. Negatively, Christians in Bulgaria during that period were automatically second-class citizens and their religion came to be more a matter of national feeling than personal commitment. Under Communist pressure religious observance dropped more drastically than anywhere else. On the positive side, their experience under Turkish rule had made Bulgarian Christians a resourceful and tenacious people, able to bend before the storm but also bide their time. Compared to five centuries, three decades of Communist rule and atheist pressure is a short time, and religion is proving more resilient than the regime expected.

The presence of ancient churches and monasteries still provides a visual reminder of the stormy past, when priests and monks were instrumental in keeping the nation as well as the Christian faith alive. To Bulgarians their church is an integral part of their national history and culture. This applies not only to the majority Orthodox Church, to which about three-quarters of their nine million people nominally belonged in 1946, but also to its next largest Christian community, the 70,000 or so Catholics. They were the outcome of missionaries sent in the nineteenth century, who resuscitated a church all but obliterated after a rising against the Turks in 1688. There are also about 10,000 Eastern rite Catholics,

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descendants of former Orthodox who, in 1860, left that church in protest at Greek domination of it. Catholics therefore are not an alien minority, but loyal Bulgarian citizens, as the pope emphasized during his private talks with foreign minister Peter Mladenov in 1978.

TWO FURTHER FACTORS need to be borne in mind in order to understand Bulgarian Christianity today — Communist brutality, and extreme isolation. When the Communists first came to power the leader of the Orthodox Church was spared, for Archbishop Stefan was a man of outstanding spiritual, moral, and intellectual caliber, well-known internationally. However in 1948, when he made it quite clear that there were certain areas in which the church could not compromise and demanded a national plebiscite of the whole people on the question of their rights and freedoms, he was "retired" and replaced by a more flexible leader. Though Stefan died in 1957, he still has his dedicated followers today, including two monks who defected while on a visit to Britain in 1978. Thousands of Christians, including over three hundred Orthodox priests and most of the two hundred Catholic ones, except foreign nationals, were imprisoned, mostly on Belen Island. Few of those who survived talk of their experiences. There were show trials. After intensive brain-washing all but one of fifteen leading Protestants "confessed" to espionage, and two Catholic nuns "confessed" to having had drunken orgies with men in their convent.

Though most prisoners were released by the early 1960s, brutality, now usually in the more subtle, hidden guise of pressure and intimidation, remained. Teaching religion to minors is banned, but Catholic clergy use carefully devised question-and-answer sessions. As recently as 1975 the aged Capuchin Father Bogdan Giev got into trouble over this. After interrogation he returned home in great distress and died the next day.

Despite the fact that Bulgaria was the first Warsaw Pact country to open its doors to Western tourism — as long ago as 1969 — Christians still suffered from an isolation more complete than that of any other Iron Curtain country — Albania always excepted. Most tourists were only interested in the golden Black Sea beaches; those who were Christians could find little to arouse enthusiasm. Church life seemed to be stagnating; there were still a fair number of elderly worshippers — the State wasn't bothered about them — but few others. Anti-religious teaching in schools seemed effective; discrimination against, and pressures on, church-going professional people could be intolerable. Western Christians found it almost impossible to establish contact with them. Bulgaria is riddled with informers; they are even planted in church congregations. As we have seen, there were things which no one would talk about. Neither would they accept gifts of money or of religious literature, even though it was desperately needed. It was too risky.

Catholic visitors were appalled to find their priests and nuns, old and almost destitute, living in makeshift accommodations such as bell-towers, sacristies, church choirs and shacks; all presbyteries had been confiscated. When a German newspaper printed a photograph of Bishop Simeon Kokov's episcopal "palace," one room with no running water, divided by a curtain, the government was furious. As for literature, no Bibles were printed there between 1925 and 1982 when the first of 30,000 Bibles promised for Orthodox parishes appeared. Between 1948 and 1975 all relations between the Bulgarian government and the Vatican were cut, and it was only in 1975 that the Vatican was definitively informed that the much esteemed Bishop of Nikopolis, Msgr. Eugene Bossilkov, had been executed after his trial back in 1952.

DESPITE THIS depressing picture there were positive aspects of church life too. The Bulgarian government follows the Soviet regime closely in the field of legislation on religion, but there were a few loopholes, and the Orthodox church has made good use of them. Priests do not have to have a civil license so they are less likely to be dismissed from their parishes than those in the USSR. They also had voluntary parish groups, men and women who cleaned the churches, sang in the choir, went on outings with the priest and even helped him train some members as lay preachers. These groups, known as "Bratrstva," would be impossible in a Russian Orthodox parish.

If the State made use of the churches, for instance in allowing "favored" clergy abroad to attend Peace Conferences to promote Soviet policy, Christians have also shown themselves capable of using such openings. Well-restored historic churches, church choral singing for which Bulgaria is renowned and the ritual of Orthodox services are all powerful tools of evangelism. The churches too have been very astute in taking full advantage of every anniversary of the major events of Bulgarian history.

It was such an apparently fortuitous event which enabled the Vatican to reopen negotiations with the regime and demand fairer treatment for Bulgarian Catholics. The 1300th anniversary of the nation was due in 1981, so in 1975 the Prime Minister, Todor Zhidkov paid an unexpected visit to Rome to request access to the Vatican's invaluable Bulgarian archives. Without even bothering to consult his church office in Sofia, Zhidkov assented to Pope John Paul's two candidates for the episcopate; 55-year-old Vasco Seirekov for Nikopolis, and, very surprisingly and belatedly, Bogdan Dobranov for Sofia-Plovdiv. Msgr. Dobranov had actually been consecrated by Pope John XXIII in 1959, but was rejected by the government as being too strong and uncompromising a personality. In 1975 Zhidkov's attitude was probably that Catholics, being a mere one percent of the population, were insignificant.

According to State estimates the poverty-stricken, isolated Catholic church should have died out. Hardly any of the fifty surviving priests were under fifty years old. There was no seminary, no Catholic press, no literature. Congregations were mostly elderly and poor peasants, with few young people except in the traditionally Catholic villages around Plovdiv. All teaching of the faith had to be done through sermons and services. By 1974 there were no Western-rite bishops, only

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Methodius Stratiev, Exarch for the 10,000 Eastern rite Catholics. Yet, relatively speaking, Catholics had maintained their numbers far better than the much larger Orthodox church or the smaller Protestant ones.

How was it that the Catholic church survived? To some extent the reason lies in the days before the Communist takeover. After the overthrow of the Turks, Catholics had made a social, cultural, and educational contribution out of all proportion to their numbers. Their clergy were so well educated and of such a high caliber that not one subsequently renounced his vocation under Communist pressure. Also, between 1925 and 1934 the nuncio in Sofia was none other than Angelo Roncalli. He promoted intercommunion and friendship between the Catholics of different rites — today priests minister to Catholics of either rite. The future John XXIII also promoted close relations with the Orthodox, and won such esteem and affection that Bulgarians still call him the "Bulgarian Pope." An unexpected result of this was that during Vatican II the notably hard-line regime actually allowed one bishop to attend each session. Msgr. Kokov's excellent translation of the reformed services into the vernacular is followed intently (as are the excellent sermons) by a laity which has been outstanding in its dedication and faithfulness.

FOLLOWING THE reestablishment of relations, and the frank discussions between the pope and the regime's representatives in 1978, the church has won some, admittedly very limited, concessions. Although the seminary is not being reopened, two young men are studying in Rome. A handful of pilgrims were allowed to attend the 1981 Bulgarian celebrations in Rome and the Lourdes Eucharistic Congress. Negotiations on statutes for the two churches are taking place, Sofia-Plovdiv was given the official status of diocese and a new bishop, Msgr. Samuel Dzhundrin (previously sentenced to twelve years as a French spy after his return from France) replaced the beloved Vasco Seirekov, who died after two years of unsparing and heroic itinerant pastoral work.

Besides this, Catholics have benefited from overall relaxation within their country since the late 1970s, from the confidence generated by their having a Slav pope who understands existence under a Communist regime, and from the modest religious revival which started spontaneously in all denominations in 1977, though particularly in the Pentecostal church. One result is that miraculous healings have been reported. The government reacted by sentencing five leading Pentecostalist evangelists to terms of up to four years in 1979, on charges of currency irregularities, but all are now free. Although later and to a smaller degree than in other Eastern bloc countries, young people have been showing an increasing interest in Christianity, and Catholics show an ecumenical spirit.

Visitors report a heartening growth of confidence and openness among Catholics, now less cautious. There are seventy nuns, few but of excellent quality, and they include a handful of young vocations. They have benefited from the training given to young priests and are surprisingly well-informed. In Methodius Stratiev, the senior bishop, the church has an outstanding spiritual leader. The regime has found him tougher than they reckoned after fourteen years in prison camps.

The church as a whole could have retreated into a ghetto and died a slow death. The government thought it would. That it didn't is a tribute to its caliber and explains the high regard in which it is held by the Vatican. Last year the government, responding to the religious revival, began to clamp down again. The ban on instructing minors was reiterated, and significantly it was the Catholic bishops who were specifically told to make their priests stop it. The excellent Orthodox bratrstva were banned; now only those paid to do it are allowed to clean churches or sing in the choir. Active Christians, Protestants in particular, are again under pressure. A Pentecostalist church was demolished. The Orthodox seem to be under greater pressure not to have contacts with other Christians.

With the position of Catholics only so recently ameliorated, and now possibly deteriorating again, the silence of the Vatican over the "Bulgarian Connection" is hardly surprising. The Vatican seems to bear the regime no animosity; it regards them as mere tools of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile Pope John Paul is not prepared to say anything which could in any way jeopardize this heroic little church.

JAMES HEARST

The Shelled Pea News

To shell peas on a hot
morning in a pan with a wide
bottom takes all the character
she possesses and her temper
climbs with the thermometer.

She shucks them because she
won't eat pods, cows chew cuds,
she has only one stomach,
sometimes more than enough.

She keeps a week-old newspaper
in her lap to catch the pods,
and reads that there are
one hundred million solar systems
in our galaxy. That takes
her mind off the Russians.

One hundred million solar systems
in our galaxy, how many other
women are shelling peas.

At the bottom of the page
it says, never run from a bear
but don't threaten it. And she
shells peas in a pan with a wide
bottom on a hot morning, citizen
of one hundred million solar systems.

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Tent City

MICHAEL HIGGINS

THE NEED to cope with the homeless has confronted American cities with a problem as perplexing as Rubik's Cube. A shining star in the economy of the Southwest, Phoenix, Arizona, has been forced to confront the problem head on.

Robert Morrill is 25. His last steady job was as an attendant at a gas station in Riverside, California, before it burned down. His wife lives back in Mississippi. The mayor of Phoenix, Margaret Hance, didn't want Robert Morrill hanging around downtown. Her plans for a rejuvenated downtown didn't include Tom Pope and his small family either. Pope, an ex-used-car salesman from Banning, California, sleeps under the stars every night, rising early to make applications at places like the dog track, the state fair and restaurants, but to no avail. Using donated food and an oversized steel kettle, Pope cooks nightly dinners eaten by as many as 200 other indigents. They line up holding tin trays, not unlike Depression scenes.

Morrill, Pope and as many as six hundred other homeless people have taken refuge in a squatter's block just a brisk five-minute walk from City Hall. They sleep in tents, sometimes made of cardboard, often just plastic garbage bags resting on sticks. They huddle around campfires as the evenings drag on and use fire hydrants for sinks.

It took awhile for the Mayor and her City Council to get used to their poor visitors. They weren't courted as were the conventioners who sleep a mile away at the Hyatt. In fact, beginning in 1981, Phoenix did everything possible to keep people like Morrill or Pope out of its downtown.

Taking the advice of a City Council-appointed task force which recommended removing the support system of the indigents, the city forced the closing of most of the area's shelters, alcoholic dry docks and residential hotels. Zoning changes and the powers of condemnation were used. The city enacted stronger laws against vagrancy and public drunkenness.

The transients didn't disappear, however. Their numbers increased as the nation's economy worsened. A study sponsored by Arizona State University and South Phoenix Mental Health profiled the city's homeless.

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Half the transients were found to be from the greater Southwestern region; 63 percent were white, with a median age of thirty-five. Nearly half the transients had military experience, and a third admitted to daily alcohol use. The preponderance, 89 percent, were men. Drugs did not seem to be a major problem. Finding employment was not going to be easy for many of them, even with a rosier economy. A little less than a quarter of the homeless were classified as C.M.I.s (chronically mentally ill), while 38 percent were physically disabled. The study concluded that the homeless were "a very heterogeneous group . . . they don't fit into one or two pigeonholes."

Dr. Louisa Stark, one of the study's authors, cites economics as the main cause of the current homelessness. "Many of them come to Phoenix because they lost their jobs, and there are more jobs here than in Detroit or Akron. It's a good choice as far as the weather's concerned, or it's a good choice if they get a job; but it's a bad choice as far as the help one can get here, which is less than in Minneapolis, Akron, or Detroit."

When Phoenix forced the closing of its downtown residential hotels, "flophouses," or rooming houses, as they may be called, they dislocated many elderly men, the majority of whom relied on their monthly Social Security checks as their sole income. "These hotels, while not attractive to most of us, served a purpose for many of the elderly men who resided there," according to Dr. Stark. "Many of the older men downtown didn't want an apartment or a house. They were happy with a room and access to a communal dayroom. They didn't want to clean, cook, or pay utility bills," she said.

An anthropologist, Dr. Stark had spent eight years in Latin America, studying the effects of social and economic upheavals. Two years ago the New York City-based Coalition for the Homeless arranged for her to spearhead an effort to help the homeless of Phoenix. She helped form a consortium of thirty-five social agencies, religious groups, and government agencies which developed a three-tier model to aid the homeless. The first tier was the most basic: the need for an emergency shelter. "Having a safe place to sleep, three meals a day and a place to wash up, will do a lot for these people," Dr. Stark said.

The second tier would be geared to six-month occupancies. Job training would be conducted and entitlements applied for. The chronically mentally ill could be placed in halfway houses. The third and final tier would be long-term. It plans for the construction of more low-income housing, possibly even a

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farm where people who will never get back into the mainstream would be able to perform simple chores, such as growing food for themselves.

IRONICALLY, the homeless squatters inhabiting Tent City, as the largest downtown camp was called, were only a stone's throw away from a pastoral farm scene. High grass and blue skys provided the backdrop as contented pigs sipped from a stream the transients saw daily. It was a drawing on the wall of Farmer John Meats, a neighboring business less than thrilled with the onslaught of transients in the area. When the St. Vincent De Paul Society announced plans to convert a nearby warehouse into a 270-bed shelter, a number of downtown businesses filed complaints with the zoning board in an effort to block the shelter's opening.

As the weeks rolled by, the situation at Tent City became more dangerous. Over fifty arrests were made during January, mostly for public drunkenness and disturbing the peace. Then one night, two men were shot at the camp after a late-night dispute. Both survived but it was obvious that a rowdier atmosphere was prevailing and something would have to be done.

The Salvation Army had moved those with children a few weeks before, sensing the danger. These families were provided with motel rooms, at the Salvation Army's expense. Another group of homeless were also early evacuees. Mostly young people, serious about finding employment and avoiding violence, this group called their new camp, located under the Maricopa Freeway, Camp Swappy.

Mayor Hance and the City Council realized that changes were going to have to be made. The city had to maintain order, even if the care of the indigent might not be its domain. When heavy rains pelted Phoenix in early February, City Hall granted St. Vincent's the right to open the shelter on a temporary basis, weeks before the scheduled zoning decision. It was a reaction to the deteriorating conditions at Tent City, many of whose residents were in no condition to weather heavy rains. Mike, a Vietnam vet in his twenties, a camp resident who'd left his wife and kid in Idaho while looking for work, said, "If you sit here for awhile, you get to recognize people by their coughs."

The Hance administration pledged to assist St. Vincent's in running the shelter, a far cry from the wait and see posture they assumed a couple of months before. At that time, City Councilman Calvin Goode's authorization of portable toilets in the occupied area were roundly criticized by his fellow City Council members. Why should the city spend $300 for toilets, they'd objected. Even a spokesman for the Salvation Army joined in. "How would they like it if we put a couple of toilets on the steps of City Hall?" Tent City was located on Salvation Army property.

IT BECAME clear that the homeless preferred to remain downtown. Tent City sat across the street from both St. Vincent De Paul's dining room and the Salvation Army headquarters. The food stamp office was four blocks away and the temporary employment agencies were also downtown. Only downtown liquor stores highlighted the cheap wines bought by the transients. Finally, the blood banks, often their only employer when times were bad, had downtown locations.

Before the St. Vincent's shelter opened, an ill-fated attempt to move the transients from Tent City had backfired. Fearing a much delayed zoning approval, city officials and the Salvation Army joined forces in a plan to transport the homeless to a vacant lot near a landfill in south Phoenix. Circus tents would be set up to house them on city property.

The city called a meeting to discuss the plan. Flyers were delivered to neighboring homes the day before the meeting and the whole neighborhood, mostly black, showed up. A Salvation Army spokesman lost the crowd when he assured them the camp would be something they would be proud of. City officials were asked who would be liable for property damage caused by transients in the area. Referring to Tent City, an elderly homeowner asked, "If you can't control them there, how can you do it here?"

At a City Council hearing the following day, even the homeless spoke against the plan. One speaker compared the abandoned lot to a concentration camp and said, "All they need are the ovens." Sensing a no-win situation, the City Council voted the plan down, deciding instead to expedite the approval of St. Vincent's shelter. A permit was granted, over the objection of local businessmen. City Councilman Barry Starr called the step the city's first positive one.

Phoenix's homeless situation didn't look as bleak anymore.

Local churches intensified their help. Episcopal Bishop Joseph Heistand headed a committee of church leaders seeking assistance. A fund was set up to assist the homeless, its goal $225,000. The Catholic diocese stood firmly behind the St. Vincent De Paul shelter.

The black churches of Phoenix took direct action to ease the plight of the homeless. Church members brought food and clothing to residents of Tent City and Camp Swappy on an almost daily basis.

Churches also began signing up for an interdenominational program, tentatively called Adopt-a-Person. Pre-screened members of the homeless community would be provided with room and board in the homes of church members during their difficult period of re-entry into the job market. Participants would be selected only after an evaluation by either St. Vincent's or the Salvation Army.

The center of the storm, the St. Vincent De Paul shelter,

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now officially opened, was a hub of homeless activities. Jill Holcomb, an ex-teacher who had previously run a temporary employment agency in Denver, started a jobs program in the center. A local community college scheduled courses in reading, writing, and job interview training for the homeless, to be held at the shelter.

Dr. Louisa Stark was named director of St. Vincent's shelter. Confident that something could be done for all the area's indigents, Stark, through her eloquent appeals for understanding in the plight of the homeless, has received recognition as a national spokesperson for the cause. A lean woman whose face radiates both kindness and perseverance, Stark calls it time for government to recognize the severity of the homeless situation and get involved. This seems to be happening.

In Arizona, a powerful state legislator pushed through a plan to open a second shelter. This "overflow" shelter, to be staffed by the Salvation Army, would be located on state property. Meanwhile, the federal government announced a plan which would allow cities like Phoenix the free use of vacant federal buildings as shelters for the homeless.

Since the St. Vincent's shelter reaches capacity at 275 visitors, people are still sleeping at Tent City. The folks there still cough a lot. Only now, the rest of the city hears them.

Art

THE EICHENBERG IMPACT

NO LESS DIRECT AT 82

WHEN *Newsweek* magazine cited Barry Moser last year as "perhaps the foremost wood engraver in America," it recognized a remarkable graphic artist working in a medium that curiously attracts few young people these days as an artistic specialty. Whether it is the demands of the medium or the fact that the wood engraving print is not as jewel-like as, say, the etching or the drypoint, wood engraving just does not enjoy vogue among new artists. Yet, though only a relatively small number are working in the medium, they comprise some of the country's greatest graphic artists: Moser, of course, Clare Leighton, Lynd Ward, Grace Albee, John De Pol — then the master himself, Fritz Eichenberg.

Eichenberg has not been around as long as the medium, although at times it may seem so, his work being that voluminous and he himself that rich in years. Eichenberg was born in Cologne in 1901, and he came to this country via Mexico, where he had gone in search of Rivera and Orozco. He thought at the time that Mexico would be the ideal place for an artist with a social conscience, but seductive New York beckoned and he arrived in time for the Depression. For him it proved not all that bad. The Federal Arts Project had been set up under the WPA umbrella, and Eichenberg earned $22.75 a week when things were toughest. The wonder of it all. "There is no discrimination against new citizens, and there are no strings attached. Good art material is provided, including boxwood and tools, generous deadlines, and no censorship of any kind." Eichenberg thrived.

He has been thriving since, certainly artistically. His book illustrations, single prints, portfolios, and books of prose and fables (a 700-page manuscript of autobiography is presently in an agent's hands and a major exhibition of his work is scheduled to open in early October at the Mary Ryan Gallery in Manhattan) have made Eichenberg's name one of the most renowned in American art. Yet he remains as humble as the medium he describes as humble: "It's one of the reasons I like it" — wood engraving. And he's as accessible as a house painter. "If I hate one word," he said recently in his library-studio in Peace Dale, R.I., "it's 'I'm busy.' *Everyone* is busy with something. To say 'I'm busy' negates the fact that one is part of a society that functions because everyone pulls together. I try to be civilized, as I expect everyone else would be."

Eichenberg's civility works itself out in two distinct ways. There is first his civilized taste, as confirmed by the people of literature whom he chooses to illustrate: Erasmus, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, the Brontë sisters, Poe, Dylan Thomas. And there is his civilized sense — religious, really — of social and political values for humankind. Thus we have the two plateaus of Eichenberg's art: the art which reflects the author — Shakespeare, Tolstoy, whomever; and the art which reflects Fritz Eichenberg, pacifist, humanitarian, spreader of good words. With respect to the latter Eichenberg, he says what his art proclaims: "I have a missionary zeal to express my convictions in my work, whether this be popular or not. People can take it or leave it." Circling from another direction, he remarks: "I try to avoid duplicity. I try to avoid vagueness. I try to express as clearly as I can in my imagery how I feel about a certain thing. I feel defeated if people come up to me and say, 'What do you mean by that?' "

Actually, it is difficult to imagine anyone accusing Eichenberg of duplicity and vagueness in thought or in art. As a new immigrant he weaned himself on John Dos Passos, Upton Sinclair and Sinclair Lewis; he came early under the spell of Francis of Assisi, perhaps the most unambiguous of saints; and then of course there was Dorothy Day, whose directness of approach so perfectly matched his as to make the two friends and collaborators. This political, spiritual, and social pedigree obviously accounts for the man, but of all the contemporary influences the greatest seemingly has been Dorothy's. "I owe her much for my concepts of faith, hope, and charity in a corrupt world," says Eichenberg, and it is a debt that he has sought to repay "in a small measure" with illustrations for the *Catholic Worker*, to which he has contributed since 1949. One *Worker* graphic, "Christ of the Breadline," is by Eichenberg's accounting the most popular piece he has ever done. (His favorite book of illustrations is *The Brothers Karamazov*.)

Eichenberg was a teacher at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn when Dorothy first approached him, challenging him in effect to touch people through images as she was trying to do through

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Self Portrait, by Fritz Eichenberg

words, thus communicating the spirit of the *Catholic Worker* to people who perhaps could not read the articles she and others were writing. Eichenberg is too modest to speculate to what degree he may have succeeded, but three decades after the initial association he does say that for him the *Catholic Worker* has become "almost an identification."

Indeed so complete is this identification that some are inclined to think of Eichenberg as a Catholic. Actually he is a Quaker out of a non-practicing Jewish background. "I would say that I had no religion of any kind," Eichenberg once told the *Catholic Worker*'s Robert Ellsberg apropos his roots. "I grew up with the same mistaken notion, thinking we were German. We were not a religiously motivated family. We led a normal bourgeois German life." But only for a time; Eichenberg became one of the first refugees from Hitler's Germany.

He arrived at Quakerism through Zen Buddhism and the quietness of the Zen form of meditation — "to sit and empty your mind, to let the spirit of the Great Tao stream into you and fill you." But it was not so much the parallel reflectiveness in Quakerism which made that religion ultimately attractive to Eichenberg — the silent meeting, for instance, where individuals waited for God to speak to them with a message then to be conveyed to the larger group. It was the figure of Jesus, "the rebellious Jew"; this was the overpowering influence.

Accordingly, there is a marked biblical focus in so much of Eichenberg's work, but not only on New Testament themes. Also prominent are the prophets, the Old Testament God of righteousness, the Peaceable Kingdom of Isaiah 11, in which the lion will eat hay like the ox, and the baby shall play in the cobra's den. Eichenberg's "Peaceable Kingdom" is a Christmas-card favorite with thousands.

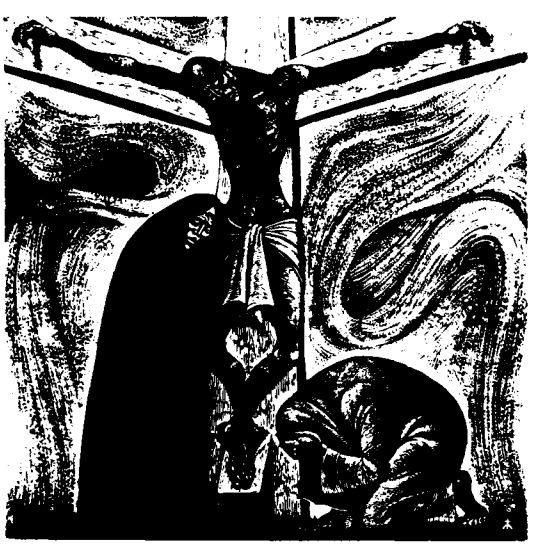
An Eichenberg wood engraving is a four-step process. A rough sketch, a more exact pen and ink drawing, and a color sketch precede the transfer of the image to end-grain wood with an engraving tool so fine as to allow the artist to control the line in one stroke. The color-sketch step is employed to convey weight and three-dimensionality for the artist's guidance. "I walk around my wood engraving like a stage director," he remarked. "I want people to get caught up and be part of the scene, acting out whatever drama is occurring at the time." It translates to a drama of style, one feature being the mysterious source of the lighting — in the wood engraving as on the stage. Look again at "Christ of the Breadline." Is the light from the halo, or again is it from a kerosene lamp as on a table down on Mott Street? The one in fact suggested the other.

In recent years Eichenberg has been anthropomorphizing the animal kingdom to make moral, social, and political statements about the state of the world — an ancient technique. Some of Eichenberg's animal prints can be ferociously blunt, and the suspicion sometimes creeps in of pessimism. Eichenberg admits to doubts, but pessimism cuts across the grain of his wood. "I continue to have faith in something I really can't define," he told Ellsberg, "—the power that allows us to talk to one another and understand one another. This is so mysterious. Why does it work for us? Why doesn't it seem to work for today's so-called statesmen and politicians?"

That, of course, is the critical question, and one on which at 82 Fritz Eichenberg has not despaired of contributing an answer. Those who yearn for a peaceable kingdom can be grateful.

JOHN DEEDY

(John Deedy, former managing editor of Commonweal, *has just completed a book on aging for the Thomas More Press. "The Christ of the Homeless," reprinted on our cover [detail on page 495] and "The Black Crucifixion," below, are among the prints by Fritz Eichenberg that have appeared in the* Catholic Worker *since 1949.)*



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'Ain't nothin' dirty goin' on'

DAN DICKINSON

SHOULD PROSTITUTION be legalized? Isn't it, after all, a "victimless crime"? Back in 1978, a musical play appeared which trumpeted both these positions. Based on the real-world closing of the Chicken Ranch, a famed bordello, *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* was an entertaining, extravagant romanticization of harlotry. In both the smash play and the less successful film version that followed, the portrait of prostitution is clear. Madams are motherly, cheery lovers of a good time; the customers are high-living good sports; the hookers are fun-loving free spirits, unhampered by the shackles of bourgeois morality. By contrast, the Authorities, those who want to stop the party, are one of a kind; repressed, mean-natured Calvinists out to impose their strait-laced beliefs on everyone else. Such repression is, of course, unwarranted, for, as a popular song in *Whorehouse* informs us, "There ain't nothin' dirty goin' on."

No? It's an unusual occurrence when art captures the essence of reality. It's rarer still when reality is allowed to illustrate, or repudiate, art. Now a fascinating new documentary has appeared which does just that, showing up *Whorehouse* and similar such ventures for the cynical distortions they are.

A Churchill film produced and directed by independent filmmakers Nick Broomfield and Sandi Sissel, *Chicken Ranch* might more profitably market itself as *Best Little Whorehouse II*. In a very real sense, that's what the film is. Following its expulsion from Texas, the Chicken Ranch moved to Nevada where, in a few counties, prostitution is legal. To this day the place continues to operate, serving up, we're to presume, the same brand of slightly naughty fun and games we saw portrayed on stage and screen. By some device, Broomfield and Sissel were allowed into the Ranch to film a few weeks of life in a bordello. The resulting movie is as devastating an indictment of prostitution, and so-called "victimless crimes," as the screen has ever portrayed.

Chicken Ranch opens with a panning shot of the whorehouse's new home. Were the setting not real, the cinematographer would have had to think long and hard to name a better locale. Surrounded by desert and framed by distant mountains, the Ranch is a collection of interconnected mobile homes encircled by a towering, locked chain fence. Outside, the imagery suggests isolation, detachment, and sterility. Moving within, the emptiness yields to an oppressive claustrophobia. Touches of tasteless luxury predominate, plush chairs and the like, stamping the whole proceedings with a certain air of tawdry desperation. As if to emphasize the point, the camera catches two hookers discussing their lives while smoking joints and peering out of an open, darkened window. Clearly, they are unable to find happiness either outside the Ranch or in.

INSIDE THE BORDELLO, we're introduced to the cast of characters. Fran, the madam, is a middle-aged woman whose face bears a smile of cordiality so frozen as to make Nancy Reagan's glacial grin seem sincere. Next there's Walter, the owner, a beer-bellied panderer who manages, until nearly the end of the movie, to lace all his statements with a low-keyed super-sincerity that's as phony as it is manipulative. When the mask comes off near the end, we are more relieved than surprised. Filling the bill are the "clients," a faceless bunch of nonentities, as much the victims as victimizers.

At last the ladies appear, parading their charms in the parlor as the customers make their selections. They're pretty enough. As Fran hotly informs more than one patron, the Ranch is a "high class" place, with the prices to match. As the women stand in line, each one steps forward to introduce herself. It's perhaps the saddest commentary in the film that as the clients make their choices moments after the introductions, not a single one bothers to recall the name of the lady he's picked. "We're just machines to them," says one prostitute. "Toys," retorts another.

Yet if the women lack individuality to the customers, they portray it clearly to the camera. There's Connie for example, a tall beauty who's nevertheless seldom picked by the clients. Connie thinks the reason is her frizzy hair. Walter thinks its her attitude. "You've got to radiate a good feeling," he advises. After all, as Fran says, "Customer is King." For Connie it's a tough task as she despises the opposite sex. In a revealing bull session, she and her counterparts discuss how they've been bullied, beaten, and tormented by the men. They get back by servicing their patrons as fast as possible, allowing themselves no emotions besides hatred and contempt. "I don't see how any girl can feel anything with a trick," says one.

Even so, the girls do have feelings, when they permit themselves to. J.J. for example. A divorcee, she found herself out of a marriage and out of work, so she turned prostitute. Around mid-movie she decides to quit. "I'm getting callous," she explains to Mandy. "I've got to get out before it's too late." As she prepares to leave, Fran asks her to call if she ever needs help or is in trouble. Welcome back to my parlor, urged the spider to the fly.

More than any of the women, however, it's Mandy who gives the film focus and resolution. At times, such as when

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she discusses J.J.'s reasons for leaving, she demonstrates both depth and awareness. She acknowledges that someday she too has to "find out if I can be a true person." On other occasions, the hooker mentality shows through. Lying on a bed, she discusses price with a client with the commission consciousness of a used car salesman. Later, at the climax, she is fired because she refuses to turn a trick at a substantial discount.

It's when Mandy is sacked that all the elements of *Chicken Ranch* come explosively together. Throughout the movie, we get the distinct impression from Walt that he anticipates that Broomfield and Sissel will produce another *Little Whorehouse*, a tribute to the joys and utility of legalized prostitution starring himself. Accordingly, the brothel owner is on his best behavior. Visited by two French journalists, he waxes poetic about his noble calling, explaining how his party house saves the lives of "basket-cases and amputees" who, after they're treated "as if they're whole men" by the likes of Connie or Mandy, go back to their hospitals determined to stay alive until their next visit. "What we're talking about," he contends, "is a form of love, really." And he's right, as in avarice, the love of money. Later, at a Thanksgiving party, in a scene as repellent as anything I've found in film, Walt offers a prayer. "This may be a brothel," he intones sanctimoniously, "but there isn't anybody here that doesn't believe in God."

As the filming proceeded, it must have become apparent to Walt that *Chicken Ranch* would not turn out the way he'd undoubtedly expected. For one thing, the camera was catching too much — drug abuse . . . the near prison-like conditions the girls endure . . . allegations of sexual abuse of the women by the owner. When Mandy is dismissed, all hell breaks out as Walt angrily stamps down the hall to eject her from the Ranch. "You get that camera out of here," he bellows at the crew. "I don't want this filmed. You film it and you're out. I'll sue the shit out of you." They filmed it, and Mandy's subsequent explanation of the firing. They caught the truth, and they were out.

LIKE ALL good movies, and unlike simplistic ones such as *Whorehouse*, *Chicken Ranch* raises more questions than it resolves. Should prostitution be legalized? Or should the Chicken Ranch be closed again?

During the Victorian age the question was publicly ignored. Officially illegal, prostitution flourished. In our own era we've brought prostitution into the open but, in our urge to prove how enlightened and tolerant we are, we've failed to remember that prostitution is, after all, exactly what the Victorians said it was: a despicable vice that exploits and dehumanizes both its practitioners and participants. It seems that, if on the one hand there's a widely understood totalitarian temptation on the part of those who possess power to accumulate more of it at the expense of freedom, there also appears to be a less frequently acknowledged libertarian leniency, a desire to make excuses for personal choices which are often bad ones. Thus, it isn't enough for many supposedly open-minded people to advocate marijuana and cocaine legalization. They have to insist that the stuff is harmless, too. It isn't enough simply to let homosexuals be. We're now expected to back high school curricula that specifically endorse the practice as an "alternative lifestyle."

Should prostitution be legalized? Despite the disgust for the institution that *Chicken Ranch* engenders, the answer might well be yes. History makes it clear that Walt and Connie and the "clients" will, like the poor, always be with us. Thus, the argument goes, why not make it legal and reduce the disease and policing problems?

Still, there's another side. Regarding prostitution, what we're talking about is not simply a seedy business. We're considering a vice that progressively dehumanizes a whole class of society. No amount of policing, regulation, or health inspection will ever change the basis of prostitution, which is the exploitation of women. We protect migrants, laborers, and immigrants from being taken advantage of. Why not women?

These are hard questions. Broomfield and Sissel do not pretend to present us with the solutions. Yet if *Chicken Ranch* doesn't have the answers, at least it serves to help us frame the issues honestly. Further, the film makes one thing clear. Concerning prostitution, there *is* something dirty going on.

Books: THE RETURN OF CHESTERTON

THE OUTLINE OF SANITY
A LIFE OF G.K. CHESTERTON
Alzina Stone Dale
Eerdmans, $15.95, 354 pp.

Michael F. McCauley

PARADOXICALLY, Gilbert Keith Chesterton's prodigious output of verse, stories, novels, biographies, essays, and literary criticism — not to mention his ever-popular Father Brown detective stories — has secured him a place in the pantheon of early twentieth-century British literary lions and pigeonholed him, perhaps permanently, as a master without a masterpiece. His prolificacy and versatility have rendered him, in biographer Alzina Stone Dale's words, "historically invisible," that is, widely quoted but little known. Dale's thorough study of his life and writing seeks to reestablish Chesterton's significance and clear away both "the myths that have obscured him" and the previous biographies that have neglected to view him as a product of his times.

The Outline of Sanity argues that Chesterton's best work — he was, in Dale's opinion, preeminently a journalist — demonstrated "unfailing sanity and bal-

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ance in an unbalanced age," an age full of "extravagant emotional reactions inside politics and out." Were G.K.C. alive today, she concludes, he "obviously would be a Russell Baker or an Andy Rooney, live on *Sixty Minutes* with cape and sword stick, delighting a worldwide audience with his amusing observations." Lest this admittedly attractive, enormously popular personality overshadow Chesterton's underlying message, however, Dale makes it clear that his point always was that "one must learn to love the world without trusting it, and that the historic Christian Church was founded on a real man, and for that reason it is indestructible."

Opinion about Chesterton has been largely based on the 1908 biography of him, *G.K. Chesterton: A Criticism*, published anonymously but written by his younger brother Cecil. Critical of G.K. for being "old-fashioned and far too whimsical," this biography portrayed him as "primarily a propagandist, a preacher of a definite message to his time [who] stands for Anti-Imperialism, and Catholicism with its back to the wall, for the hunger of a perplexed age for the more lucid life of the Ages of Faith, for the revolt against Modernity, in a word, for what may legitimately be called 'reaction.' "

Dale implies that the "distorted picture" of G.K.C. that emerged from brother Cecil's biography sprang, in part, out of a typical sibling rivalry. But because G.K. never publicly criticized his brother's biography, succeeding generations — indeed, even G.K.'s contemporaries — have assumed that Cecil knew whereof he spoke. All of which led to the myth of Gilbert Chesterton as "nothing more than a jolly, child-like giant filled with gusto and uncritical Christianity, the drinking companion of more famous men like G.B. Shaw. More recently his critics have reacted against this cartoon by suggesting that Chesterton was a stunted Peter Pan, full of dark sexual inhibitions, reactionary and rational to the point of madness." Some consider him "only a plaster saint for Roman Catholics to love, particularly those who do not admire Vatican II."

> *Whatever label he is given, Chesterton was always a Liberal convinced of the ultimate importance of the individual. He speaks to our contemporary condition; no other 'unknown' writer is so often quoted to a world that does not recognize his name, a simple paradox that would greatly amuse him.*
>
> —Alzina Stone Dale
> *Outline of Sanity*

These opinions derive, consciously or unconsciously, from the Chestertonian persona that not only was the result of the early biography, but also was sustained by Chesterton himself — his jovial personality, immense presence, slapdash scholarship, and such cultivated eccentricities of attire as his inverness cape, slouch hat, sword stick, and pince-nez. Dale examines the Chestertonian corpus — seventy-eight books, of which more than thirty are currently listed in *Books in Print* — and painstakingly sets him squarely in the midst of the political, social, and philosophical eruptions of the early twentieth century. He was, to the end, a Fleet Street commentator of considerable originality, humor, and common sense who struggled not so much "to keep old traditions free from weeds," but "to preserve the Western world against the pagans of post-Christianity."

A lifelong classic Liberal, despite the considerable ups and downs of the Liberal Party and its philosophy, Chesterton was cast in the mold of Dickensian social philosophy, that is, he had "a strong bias toward making a hero, not a pensioner, of the poor." Accordingly, he enthusiastically supported land reform, free trade, Home Rule for Ireland, disestablishment of the church, and free public education. He was, at one and the same time, an enduring friend of such so-called freethinkers as G.B. Shaw, H.G. Wells, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, and others as well as such paragons of orthodoxy as Hilaire Belloc and Ronald Knox. And his celebrated conversion to Roman Catholicism at age forty-eight consigned him, in the minds of many, to perdition; they no longer took what he said seriously, feeling that his conversion had pushed him over the brink into "fantasy land." Shaw was the most offended of Chesterton's old acquaintances because he had thought that he and Chesterton "shared basic religious assumptions." Shaw accused Chesterton of being influenced by Belloc, who "turned your pranks into prayers and your somersaults into sacraments." They remained friends, nevertheless; Shaw, in fact, bitterly complained that "he who was eighteen years the elder should be heartlessly surviving his friend." Ironically, Belloc, for his part, disapproved of Chesterton's desire to convert; once Chesterton had actually been received into the church, however, Belloc held his peace.

The inevitable tendency to lump Chesterton and Belloc together into what Shaw humorously nicknamed "the Chesterbelloc" is, according to Dale, predicated on the false assumption that "they met and spent the following thirty-five years standing together in one place." Previous biographers have considered Chesterton the disciple of Belloc who was an "intense, brooding, brilliant, and opinionated talker." Although they came to be seen as "twin" Roman Catholic apologists, Shaw observed unequivocally that "Belloc and Chesterton are not the same sort of Christian, not the same sort of pagan, not the same sort of Liberal, not the same sort of anything intellectual." Chesterton and Belloc did share, in Dale's words, "a fondness for discussion and argument, parties, writing satiric verse, and — ultimately — for Western civilization, which they both labeled 'Christendom.' "

G.K.C. has been accused of being a reactionary, a medievalist, a Victorian curiosity that was decidedly out of place in the twentieth century. In refuting this charge, Dale contrasts Chesterton and Shaw. During the early thirties, for example, Shaw had been impressed with both Soviet Russia — especially its seeming efficiency — and the forceful personalities of Stalin and Hitler — two personifications of the Shavian superman. Chesterton, for his part, had been charmed by Mussolini during a private interview and might well have thought that, in 1929, "a capable dictator who was popular with the ordinary people"

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would be better for England than "the elected members of an oligarchy." He left Rome, however, preferring "English liberty to Latin discipline." Dale concludes that it "seems a bit hard that popular wisdom considers Chesterton to be the reactionary, sectarian saint but lets Shaw go on being a Grand Old Man of the modern 'liberal' world."

Although Chesterton was always and in all things "a Liberal convinced of the ultimate importance of the individual," he occasionally spoke of preferring "the Jew who is revolutionary to the Jew who is a plutocrat." Dale, to her credit, does not gloss over this lapse with excuses or worshipful pleas for understanding the attendant circumstances. Rather, she convincingly explains the rationale for Chesterton's behavior — often enough, he was being deliberately naive.

On two occasions, however, Dale's otherwise balanced examination exaggerates Chesterton's impact. In 1910, for example, Chesterton had written a newspaper column in which he commented that "the principal weakness of Indian Nationalism seems to be that it is not very Indian and not very national." Dale explains that "a struggling young Indian student named Mahatma Gandhi, who was living in London, read [Chesterton's column] and it changed history." It is preposterous to imply, as Dale does, that because of this one newspaper column, Chesterton should be credited with singlehandedly inspiring Gandhi to change history. Later in her narrative, Dale relates Chesterton's 1930 lectures at Notre Dame. Chesterton's very presence, claims Dale, "helped to put the university 'on the map,' " Surely Notre Dame was on the map more because Knute Rockne's football players happened to have been undefeated that season than because Chesterton had sojourned on campus.

But on the whole, Dale avoids the all-too-common sin of biographers, over-reverent adulation. Her biography is honest, straightforward, sprightly, and informative. She admits that it is difficult to read and properly appreciate Chesterton in our day. Allusions in his texts to the political exigencies of his own day, though they would have been clear to his readers, are no longer obvious to today's readers who lack a detailed knowledge of British political life in the twenties and thirties. She concedes that the final verdict on G.K.C. is "not yet in"; she is nevertheless heartened by the fact that he is "being listened to again."

Ultimately, Dale asserts, appreciation of Chesterton's importance for his time — and, as Dale maintains, for our own time — requires an understanding of him as a thinker who asks "the right questions" and occasionally even knows "the right answers." Still, there is an undeniable temptation — which is especially poignant for card-carrying members of the Chesterton Society — to take Chesterton rather more seriously than he took himself. For, as he once cheerfully replied when asked which of his works he considered the greatest, "I don't consider any of my works the least great."

An outbreak of cheerfulness

AMERICA'S QUEST FOR THE IDEAL SELF
DISSENT AND FULFILLMENT IN THE 60s AND 70s
Peter Clecak
Oxford. $27.50, 391 pp.

Henry F. May

IN THE present gloomy climate of opinion it will come as a shock to many readers to encounter a book which presents the last two decades in America as a continuing and successful quest for fulfillment, reaching its peak in the late seventies and continuing into the Reagan period. According to Peter Clecak the two objectives of the quest were individual salvation (very broadly defined) and "a piece of social justice" for all sorts of groups. The general results were first, concrete gains for blacks, women, students, the handicapped, senior citizens, gays and others; and second and more important, a widening of personal and psychological options for us all. The combined result is what Mr. Clecak calls "the democratization of personhood."

The quest started in the fifties as Catholics, Jews, and others penetrated the Wasp establishment and the Beat Generation writers challenged all cultural authority in the name of feeling and sensitivity. From these beginnings sprang the multifaceted and militant "Movement" of the sixties, which successfully "rewrote the American agenda of social and cultural criticisms." While Mr. Clecak is aware of the Movement's failures and futilities, he treats it more sympathetically than many recent writers.

It is in his treatment of the seventies that Clecak breaks most sharply with prevailing opinion. When the movement of the sixties broke up, he says, the society as a whole absorbed some of its personnel and some of its purposes. In the seventies the "quest" by no means stopped. Rather it turned in part from broad social causes to the pursuit of individual and small-group "salvation." The religious content of the quest, latent in the sixties, became manifest in the seventies in the evangelical and charismatic movements, challenging all religious authority, in what Clecak calls the Protestantization of the Catholic church, and in the enormously varied search for mental and physical therapy. All this proved salutary when seen as a whole, and was too strong to be stopped even by the narrowing economic and political horizons of the early eighties.

Intellectual critics of American culture, Mr. Clecak insists, underrate the quest because of their snobbish prejudices and pervasive nostalgia. Radicals idealize the mid-sixties and spurn the seventies, liberals reject both and dream of Camelot, neo-conservatives look clear back to the order and world power of the fifties. Critics are further handicapped by their anti-religious bias, which prevents them from seeing the quasi-religious character of the sixties' rebellion—still more, from feeling any sympathy with the aspirations of the extremely varied evangelical movements of the seventies.

This book, whose scope and style make summary difficult, contains many valuable particular insights. There is also something to be said for its general ar-

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gument. It is true that contemporary American society is too various and vigorous to be summed up by fashionable breast-beaters. Many of the changes of the last twenty years are by now so taken for granted that we fail to see them. If we think hard about the society of the fifties, few of us would want to bring it back, with all its rigidities and discriminations intact. The changing, unpredictable history of American movements of liberation is a fascinating and demanding subject for social historians, and Mr. Clecak has made a brave attempt to deal with the most recent segment of that long history.

His achievement is partly explained by his personal history, which he sketches for us, openly and honestly, much in the manner of the sixties. Having written several books on American radicalism from within, he has now drifted away from his former socialist assumptions though not from "leftward impulses." He has also "returned to a liberal branch of the Christian church, in spite of a Pentecostal heart, a Roman Catholic heritage, and a stubbornly skeptical sensitivity." Mr. Clecak's kind of liberal religion seems to involve a remarkably cheerful view of human nature. This enables him to tolerate, and therefore to see, some sorts of gains ignored by others, but cheerfulness has its price. Sometimes Clecak's catholic acceptance betrays him into super-Emersonian optimism. The selfishness of the "Me decade," cultural nihilism, educational failure, mediocrity, and vulgarity are all explained away. Either they are necessary by-products of the quest, or they are exaggerated, or they are—seen properly—partly salutary. Mr. Clecak clearly detests President Reagan, yet is driven to suggest that the ascendance of the right "may turn out to be more salutary than I have been able to imagine." I suspect that he is not yet quite at ease with his new opinions, and has not decided how far to the right they are going to take him. Obviously a sensitive and humane man, he occasionally sounds like a nineteenth-century theorist of laissez-faire, demonstrating that all social evils are necessary to freedom, or even like an eighteenth-century poet who finds "all partial evil, universal good."

It is significant that the book leaves out foreign affairs almost entirely, and deals only briefly and unsatisfactorily with the nuclear danger.

Like many academic writers, Mr. Clecak spends too much time refuting his opponents. He is not successful in explaining away all the shortcomings of the seventies, and need not have tried. He would have done better to fit his own cheerful insights into a more balanced view of the period. He would also have done better if he had written more carefully and concisely. His prose, sometimes forceful and persuasive, is occasionally awkward and often repetitive.

These are common faults in this kind of writing. This book's honesty, freshness, and generous sympathies are less common. It will serve as an example of some of the faults and many of the virtues of the times it deals with.

Confrontation with the masters

SOMEWHERE—A MASTER

Elie Wiesel
Summit, $13.95, 221 pp.

Jack Riemer

THERE are those who write about Hasidism from the outside. And there are those who write about Hasidism from the inside. Elie Wiesel writes about Hasidism *from the border*.

He still is, and he always will be, the child who absorbed Hasidic tales and Hasidic values in his first formative years. But he is also the adult who saw simple faith and simple atheism go up in smoke together at Auschwitz. And he is now the one who goes about the ashes, looking for the fire. He is now the one who goes back to the world of his childhood, not to stay there, but to search for the scraps of truth that are stored there, that he brings back to sustain us who live out here.

Several years ago he gave us *Souls on Fire*, a series of portraits of the Hasidic masters. Now he gives us a sequel, a second collection of these portraits.

The chapters in this book are not essays, not formal biographies. They are portraits, closer to paintings than to photographs, closer to works of music than to still-lifes. They were originally meant to be heard, not read. One who wishes to learn all of the factual details of these masters' lives is advised to go elsewhere. One who wishes to know their innermost being should come here.

Each chapter is a kind of a confrontation. It is as if the author has summoned up the master from the grave in order to ask him a question, *the* question: *what can your life teach me about my life*, what wisdom do you have that can help me here and now?

Consider his chapter on Moshe Leib of Seshov, for example. Wiesel confesses that his attitude towards him has undergone several radical changes during the time that he has studied him. "When I first discovered him, I was happy to have found a Rebbe who was happy, I mean, really happy, totally happy with his lot. In him, I said to myself, I had found, at last, one great Master who was not involved in messianic conspiracies like the Seer of Lublin, who did not repress anguish like the Rebbe of Berditchev, who was not engaged in endless battles against despair like the Rebbe of Kotsk. Rebbe Moshe Leib seemed to me full of true joy. His joy was neither subterfuge, nor pretext, nor vehicle—it was an end in itself. And I was grateful.

"Later I became annoyed. This very serenity that had appealed to me earlier began to disturb me. How could he be so happy? I wondered. How could he—the master and friend of his followers—be happy when they were not? Could he have been blind to their woes? Could he have been that insensitive, that self-centered?

"Then came the third stage. As I went over the texts and the testimonies again and again I recognized my error. Rebbe Moshe Leib, who seemed so carefree and so at peace with himself, was neither. And I began to love him."

And so it is in each chapter. This is not a work of objective history, that records dates and facts and figures. It is a

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spiritual search, almost a detective story, an effort to catch the echo of the soul beneath the words, beneath the stories. Each of these masters lived at many levels. Each one revealed a little and hid a lot. And so one must listen carefully to the tales and one must read between the lines of the writings in order to find the real master. One must hear what is said, and one must also listen for what is left out.

For example, Wiesel recounts, "of Moshe Leib it is told that in his youth he associated with boys his own age, which was natural, except that they spent their energy, not on Torah but on pleasure. He would leave the House of Study in the evening after a day of learning and join them in the taverns and stay with them until the early morning hours. But wait, do not jump to conclusions.

"Many years later, when he was a celebrated Master in the Hasidic kingdom, one of his former companions came to Sehsov out of curiousity. He was eager to see this Rebbe who could attract so many followers. He remembered Moshe Leib immediately, and remembered the good times they had had together. What an actor, he thought. He manages to fool all these people. They don't know what we used to do, and where, once upon a time.

"But then something happened to him. Watching and listening to Reb Moshe Leib he realized his mistake. Moshe Leib had indeed fooled him—but not now—*then*! When he and the others were young and foolish sinners, Reb Moshe Leib had already been a tsadik, a Just Man in disguise, a hidden Rebbe who stayed with them in order to keep them from further degradation — and only now did he realize it."

Who is a real master? Often the one who denies that he is. And who possesses the profoundest truths? Often the one who seems the most simple.

They were an extraordinary collection of spirits, these Hasidic masters of the last two centuries. They were people who inspired others and yet suffered loneliness themselves. They were people who led groups and yet hungered for privacy, people who sustained others and yet lived with heartache themselves.

And for Wiesel, and hopefully for his readers too, the tense of the verb in that last paragraph is not quite right. We should say not that "they were" but "they are," for their tales are still being told, and as long as they are these masters still live, these messages still reverberate. In this book we do not study about them, we study them, and we study together with them.

Emptying the desk drawers

THE END OF THE WORLD NEWS
Anthony Burgess
McGraw-Hill, $15.95, 389 pp.

Bruce Cook

ANTHONY BURGESS, who once wrote a flattering review of a novel he had published under a different name and then got fired for it, would surely have had a field day with this one, his latest. And in a sense, he *has* written his own review of the book right there in a foreword to which he has signed his own, real name, John Wilson. There is a bit of rigamarole about Wilson being Burgess's literary executor (does this mean his subsequent works will appear under the Wilson name? I'll bet not), and then he describes the manuscript of the book at hand in these terms: "There appeared to be here arbitrarily assembled a fantastic tale of the end of the world, a brief biography of Sigmund Freud clearly intended, on the evidence of a preponderance of simple dialogue and a minimum of *récit*, as the raw material of a television series, and the libretto of a musical play on the theme of the visit of Leon Trotsky to the city of New York in 1917."

This is a fair description of *The End of the World News*, right down to the aside that the Freud section seems to have been written with television in mind. Television and the commercial theater are just two of the places in which Burgess has dithered lately. He suggests in the foreword that television-viewing provides a kind of loose framework for the work as a whole and presents as a paradigm a photograph of then-President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter sitting and watching not one but three television sets at once: "The author's comment on this procedure and its possible application to the craft of the novel provides an evident clue as to his intention in the work you have before you."

Well, if the Carters — or anyone else — were watching *The End of the World News* simultaneously on their three sets, then I can guarantee you that it wouldn't be long before their attention would be riveted upon the one in which Burgess's "fantastic tale of the end of the world" was unreeling. Not only is it the longest of the three, taking up just under half the book's pages, but it is also a slice of Burgess at his best, recalling his work of the early sixties, specifically his "Catholic" science fiction piece, *The Wanting Seed*.

The end of the world? Look for it in the year 2000. It will come, according to Burgess's fiction, not from nuclear destruction, but rather through the agency of a huge asteroid, dubbed Lynx, which is approaching the earth in a path close enough to turn the moon out of orbit and throw it against the earth, crushing much of it, destroying the rest with earthquakes and tidal floods.

This end has been foreseen by a group of scientists who, with the support of the federal government, are preparing for departure by spaceship. The probe will send the best and the brightest out into the universe to search for a new home, a new earth to colonize — and if not them, then their children, or their children's children. Yet the way of escape had been pointed out years before by Valentine Brodie, a science fiction writer and the husband of Vanessa Frame, who with her father initiated the project. Because of this, and out of deference to Vanessa, Brodie is included on the passenger list as the only non-scientist on the planned flight. Just at the last moment, however, Val is separated from Vanessa and her father as they are departing for the launchsite in Kansas.

Most of the novel — and this science

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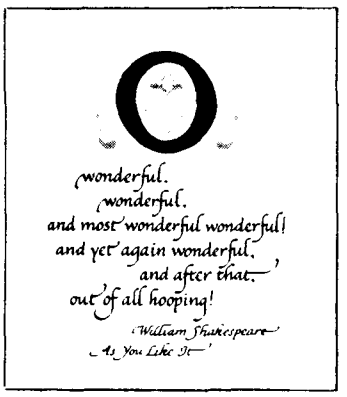
Out of All Hooping

HAVE you ever received an INKLINGS calendar? A LITERARY CALENDAR? If so, and you are curious, you are already gratefully aware of the existence of Cahill & Company. But you may not be aware of what the Cahills do besides publishing those two attractive calendars and why they do what they do.

Their seventh annual Christmas catalogue (or this review of it) is a way to find out. The covers carry reproductions of prints coming from the Cuala Press, Dublin. The front one is "The Fiddler of Dooney" by W.B. Yeats, illustrated by a sketch of an active fiddler. The back has two, an old Gaelic rune of hospitality and Padraic Colum's "A Cradle Song." In addition to lovely illustrations, the text of each is done in appropriately exquisite calligraphy. And inside the back cover, well written as is everything else in the catalogue, is a brief account of the Cuala Press.

I mention "The Fiddler of Dooney" because the Cahills use him in their introductory letter to show what their offerings have in common. The Fiddler stands for artists or writers whose work Susan and Thomas Cahill are intent upon making available—their own publications and other products, those of other presses, ceramics, records, prints, and even a made-to-order pullover knit by Marie Whiteside ($395 —the most costly item in the whole varied collection). The Cahills themselves write: "In these pages are many Fiddlers. . . solemn and dignified, playing airs that grab us by the soul. . . raggle-taggle tunesters, bringing a lilt to our walk and a smile to our lips . . . calendars, cards, and other printed materials—products that borrow the airs of the great Fiddlers and serve as gentle, daily reminders of great (and frolicsome) matters."

The catalogue has two major divisions (plus some miscellaneous items): the first, those mentioned above and appearing under the Sign of the Three Candles (pages 3 through 17); and the second, their choice of the best literature, fiction



and non-fiction, for adults and children. **You cannot just casually page through either division.** Handling the first, you may be caught first by the illustrations or by the quotations or by the loving, sometimes grinning, accurate descriptions. The quotation from Goethe (page 3) could be one version of the Cahills' ambition: "One ought, every day at least, to hear a little song, to see a fine picture, and, if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable words." This year's calendars include, in addition, *Emily Dickinson's Book of Days*, *The Mystery Calendar* (see the catalogue, pages 38-9, for reviews of 34 whodunits), *Inklings*, *Prince Caspian*, *The Shakespeare Calendar*, *Great Cathedrals*, *The Druids*, and two baby calendars: *A Time to Be Born* (first year) and *A Time to Grow* (second year).

There are irresistible literary Christmas cards, cathedral notes and Christmas cards, Shakespearean note cards—all but the cathedral set with quotations you will want to read and think about whether you can buy or not. (Actually, the prices are surprisingly reasonable, considering the various kinds of joy and pleasure each card can give to both sender and receiver.) **To come upon a card that uses "wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful wonderful! and yet again wonderful, and after that, out of all hooping!" can be unbelievably good fortune to the lover of Shakespeare's Celia and Rosalind. Even to come upon the quotation in the catalogue among others more serious is fun.**

If you are wondering what books to buy, to read, or simply to recall or suggest, the second division (pages 18 through 44) is incredibly rich. Each book or set is reviewed briefly in such a way that you learn not only what it is about but also what its tone is or why it is special. Because these books are in print (in some instances that is a kind of miracle, considering what is being done to books these days), **if I were in any way responsible for a book collection, I would check with what the Cahills are recommending against what I already have, confident that I was not erring in ordering on that basis.** In addition to the specific reviews, there are thoughtful and thought-provoking generalizations like this one:

> The early 'teen years are the best time to put young people in touch with the classics. Though writers such as Dante are best approached after 40, some of the Victorians are close enough to the spirit of our age (and, in their Gothic way, to the crises of teen-age identity) to be quite accessible even to a thirteen-year-old. To the young person who can resonate with them, these books become a first set of Keys to the Past, a first experience in opening up the language and experience of all who have gone before us (page 22).

Then follow reviews of *David Copperfield* and *Jane Eyre*, the latter concluding with "Reader, it is a book to cherish."

Certainly, by the time you come to page 41 and discover a review of *Happy to Be Here* that characterizes Garrison Keillor's humor as "gentle humor from a humorist who actually *likes* people and whose only real target is cant," you will understand why I could write much more than I have about—yes, a catalogue, and why I can conclude with "Reader, Cahill & Company's current catalogue is something to cherish." Honestly.

—Sister Linnea Welter, O.S.B.

[This review, reproduced in its entirety, is taken from *Writ*, a publication of St. Benedict's College in Minnesota. Did you miss the Seventh Annual Cahill Christmas Catalogue? You needn't miss the Eighth. To subscribe for one year (four catalogues) send $2.00 to: **Cahill & Company,** 149 Palisade Street, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522.]

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fiction tale is the only one of the book's three fictional components that can truly be called a novel — has to do with Brodie's picaresque journey across an America rent by cataclysm in the company of a Falstaffian actor named Willett. It is a bit muddled, with the involvement of a Billy Graham-like evangelist and a couple of gangsters and all, but when the narrative of the trip is not actually horrifying (blood sacrifices, cannibalistic orgies, etc.), it is really extraordinarily funny. A bit of the true Burgess of old.

As for the rest of the book, well, I found myself reading very quickly through Trotsky-in-New York to get on to Val Brodie's tale. It is unimaginably silly to find Trotsky bursting into song about the revolution at one minute, and then serenading his New York love, Olga, in the next. The thing is simply not worthy of inclusion here, not worthy of publication at all.

Freud? Quite a different matter. What Burgess has given us is good but rather thin and unfinished, very much indeed like a treatment for a television "docudrama," which may certainly have been the way it started out. The characters — Freud himself, Jung, Otto Rank, and others — are very well drawn, and the conflicts between them are made quite real. He could have rescued this material by turning it into a full novel. I wonder why he didn't.

For that matter, I also wonder why he felt obliged to pad out the science fiction tale with two such pieces as Trotsky and Freud, one feebly insubstantial and the other unfinished. I fear that as good and entertaining a writer as he is, Anthony Burgess wishes to be thought a *major* writer, one who is willing to produce thick books with fancy structural theories hatched up after the fact à la Lawrence Durrell. On the other hand, *The End of the World News* may simply have provided a good opportunity for him to empty his desk drawers of spare manuscripts. And if he *is* accepted as a major writer, not just his manuscripts but even his laundry lists will be of interest to the scholarly worms that feed upon his corpus.

REVIEWERS

MICHAEL F. McCAULEY *is the author of* A Contemporary Meditation on Doubting *(Thomas More).*

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Hearing the cosmic engine's roar

HERMES
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY

Michel Serres, Edited by Josué V. Harari & David F. Bell
John Hopkins, $14, paper $7.95, 168 pp.

David Toolan

HERMES, tutelary god of commerce, music, and theft, protector of boundaries and guide of travelers through harrowing terrain (his statue in ancient Greece stood at crossroads), famous for ingenuity and inventiveness — Michel Serres impersonates him brilliantly. It's called hermeneutics, the art of interpretation.

We expect theologians and literary critics, lately sociologists, to be able at it. What we are not used to, at least on this side of the Atlantic, is hermeneutics in the hands of philosophers of science (like Serres), Hermes standing at the crossroads of the late Lord Snow's two cultures — and making connections where Immanuel Kant set up embargoes. I mean, who believed Whitehead when he claimed Wordsworth, not Isaac Newton, provided a completer insight into nature — and who today at NIH or MIT buys the "new physics" and homeopathic medicine of neo-Taoist California holists?

Well for one besides myself, biologist Stephen Jay Gould almost believes the holists; finally though, their mystical physics strikes him as reductionistic. He confesses himself a "New York holist" — one in need of more attention to the reality of differentiation and conflict. Agreed.

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Enter Michel Serres, interdisciplinary wizard and professor of the history of science at the Sorbonne — a New York holist's dream. A towering intellectual eminence on the continent, he's not widely known here. This book is meant to remedy that deficiency, and does so handily. The editors' introduction, which maps the coordinates of Serres's thinking and elucidates his hermetic anti-method, is very helpful — both before and after reading the essays themselves. Serres's style, playful, anecdotal, limned with myth and story, is not the heavy-going we expect of the philosopher. Had Montaigne sharply mused in the no-man's-land between the exact sciences and the humanities, he might have written these essays. The author of a now classic critique of Leibniz's totalistic systematizing, Serres's choice of the unsystematic literary form of essay is deliberate. It allows his verbal twists and tropes to reflect the plural spaces, wild topography, of an essentially unfinished, multi-leveled, open system reality. The medium is the message. Its purpose is also genuinely philosophic: "to see on a large scale, to be in full possession of a multiple, and sometimes connected, intellection."

The essays often begin innocently enough, for instance, with a contrast between two painters, George Garrard's 1789 drawing of a brewer's dockside warehouse and Turner's painting of a tugboat in 1844, the two scenes graphically evoked as the trained eye of Gombrich might do it — but before you're through you've gotten a sensible understanding of the metamorphosis wrought by the industrial revolution on our imaginations of both matter and mind, a stunning exposition of the whole seismic shift from classical mechanics to thermodynamics, and an appreciation of how the arts and sciences link up, address common cultural themes, and together *construct* the space and time we live in. Breathtaking.

Or try Serres on Zola's reinsertion of myth into genetics in the epic of the Rougon-Macquart family, a replay for the nineteenth century of what Homer did for his time in the *Odyssey*. Against-the backdrop of information theory physics, literature itself becomes a kind of physics, an energy transformer reconnecting, revitalizing what the logos of science separates and diffuses. So again, watch Serres insist, against modern critics, that Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* indeed *is* physics after all, but a physics tuned to different political exigencies than those that drive the modern West to an arms race. In all these samples, this crossroads Hermes lets you see that "the science in question is diffused along paths that belong to myth. It is grasped as myth, it becomes myth."

You say you can't fathom esoteric information theory? Well then, let Serres translate it for you into the imbalancing act of Molière's Don Juan! Yes, the book is full of surprises, incongruous conjunctions — which are just the man's service: to make the circulation, communication, flow between hitherto disjoined, closed bodies of knowledge, regional pockets of order and disorder. The point is to find the straits, the passages between — which is what knowing in this complex world is about. "I see that the state of things consists of islands sown in archipelagoes on the noisy, poorly-understood disorder of the sea . . ." Thermodynamic's entropic sea, that is. This is not the cosmos of Laplace's deterministic dream of homogeneous space where a single scientific or universal law charts passage among the military atomic ranks, lines, chains, and sequences.

No, the whole deterministic image, argues Serres, has ideological roots. "In whose interest is it to lay down a law of history [signifying fixity, redundancy, closure] if not in the interest of whoever wishes to stop time? Of course it is in the best interests of whoever pursues power in economics, politics, or philosophy to close off genesis . . . The law is a theft." Descartes's *Discourse on Method*, says Serres in an extraordinary rereading of La Fontaine's fable of the wolf and the lamb, "is a science of war." (Catholic neoscholastics always suspected as much!) Sorry, Max Weber's "iron cage," Rudolph Bultmann's "modern scientific outlook," are half-truths, special limit cases. Nature's fundamental way is *illegal*, she thrives on chancy instability and turbulence. If you doubt that, Isabelle Stengers and Nobel laureate Ilya Priogogine provide a useful "postface" to this book which will bring you up to date, to the curious implication too that Lucretius's hymn to Venus, as Serres argues, was closer to the truth of things than Newton, and maybe even than Einstein.

I question whether Serres's advocacy of Epicurean *ataraxia* rather than something a bit more lusty is the proper response to a prolifically messaged cosmos (I'm for the latter, I think). Yet I seem to recognize as my own the thermodynamic "sea" upon which Serres sails upstream, against the entropic tide. In contrast to the cosmology of classical mechanics anyway, this fiery matter, without hard edges, chancy, vibratory, aleatory, is the stuff of literature. It's nature as matrix of unpredictable births, the original meaning of *physis* recouped, and life no longer a strange cosmic anomaly. Above all, pluralistic rather than uniformitarian. What is an organism in such a multiverse? "A barrier," answers Serres, "of braided links that leaks like a wicker basket but can still function like a dam. . . . All times converge in this temporal knot . . . a sheaf of times." And ourselves? "We are submerged to our neck, to our eyes, to our hair, in a furiously raging ocean. We are the voice of this hurricane, this thermal howl . . ." why don't we hear it, he asks, the deafening noise of thermal chaos, the great cosmic engine's roar?

Had it ever occurred to you to ask that question? No, it hadn't to me either. But answering it leads a wayward Serres to conclude his provocative essay, "The Origin of Language," with this: "It is no longer necessary to maintain the distinction between introspective knowledge, or 'deep' knowledge, and objective knowledge. . . . Nothing distinguishes me ontologically from a crystal, a plant, an animal, or the order of the world: we are drifting together toward the noise and black depths of the universe . . . Knowledge is at most the reversal of drifting, that strange conversion of time . . . To be or to know from now on will be translated by: see the islands, rare or fortunate, the work of chance or necessity."

Well, I want to grab hold of my leaky

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wicker basket, and convert some of that thunderous cosmic howl into three cheers to Messrs. Harari and Bell, and of course the crystalline Mr. Serres, for this wonderfully turbulent book. My circulation is much the better for it.

In brief

MILTON AND THE MARTIAL MUSE: *PARADISE LOST* AND EUROPEAN TRADITIONS OF WAR, *by James A. Freeman, Princeton University Press, $17.50, 253 pp.*

Professor Freeman's intention is to relate *Paradise Lost* to European traditions of war by demonstrating the debt of many details in the poem to Milton's familiarity with a vast array of classical and especially Renaissance works on warfare. The consequences of this investigation are sometimes dubious, sometimes illuminating. Satan masses his rebellious angels in the northern part of Heaven (5,689), a circumstance, writes Freeman, citing a 1593 military manual, that "would not surprise any Renaissance geopolitician since it was a byword 'that Northern people are commonly more valiant and venturous, than those of Asia & Afrike.' " In fact, the main reason that no one would be surprised by the geographical detail is Isaiah 14, 12-13, where the proud Lucifer is specifically placed in the north of Heaven. On the other hand, Freeman helpfully glosses a moment in Hell (1, 663-68) when the fallen angels applaud their chief by banging their swords against their shields. Such display is very poor show, the kind of thing, according to classical writers, done by the barbarian enemies of Rome but never by Roman soldiers themselves; the practices thus discredits the damned legions.

Despite the approval of proper military display that this poor behavior implies, Freeman believes that Milton is generally against the military in all forms. In the most tendentious part of the book he argues that Milton subtly but vigorously opposed an anti-war stance to a prevailing tradition that was almost entirely pro-war. Part of the goal of *Paradise Lost,* Freeman writes, was to "correct" the attitude of Milton's contemporaries, almost all of whom "approved of war." Elsewhere he claims, "Milton implies that the communal nightmare of his age is the heroic vision of war allowed by centuries of lazy analysis. . . ." There are problems here. First of all, although Freeman does a good job of marshaling pro-war authorities over the centuries, he ignores the substantial contribution of the early Renaissance humanists to the articulation of an anti-war position, which was thereafter available to, if not necessarily endorsed by, all educated Europeans. Freeman curtly dismisses the work of Erasmus (and, in the same sentence, that of other ancient and Renaissance anti-warriors), yet *The Praise of Folly,* various of the colloquies, and most important the essay *Dulce bellum inexpertis* were repeatedly translated and reprinted throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. If Milton was anti-war, he had an established tradition behind him.

Still, I don't find the wealth of military detail in *Paradise Lost* to be an implicit criticism of the heroic vision of war (though the war in Heaven may have been a very bad idea). Milton knew his military authorities, as Freeman well shows, and he used them, to good purpose, in particularizing place, character, and event in his poem. But it is not, finally, adherence to military doctrine, or violation of it, that makes the case against Satan and the fallen angels. In one extremely pertinent observation Freeman admits as much: "The soldiers of Hell fail to sustain our unqualified acceptance for one basic reason: they worship a false god. Satan's troops obviously embody many dreams of military theorists by having a firm chain of command, precise formations, unquestioning obedience, fine equipment, swift communications, sensible operating specialties, high performance, and bouyant morale." All that, I should say, is true: the poem's reader, like its author, rejects the fallen angels not because they are soldiers and it is better not to be, nor because they are poor soldiers and it is better to be good ones, but because they

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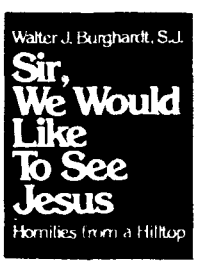

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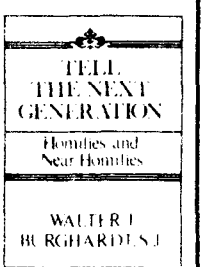

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are on the side of what is evil and false.

MARK TAYLOR

THE FRENCH, *by Theodore Zeldin. Pantheon, $17.95, 538 pp.*

With more and more francs to the dollar and competing overseas airlines offering bargain rates, there was additional incentive for Americans to visit France this summer. Even the recent Paris demonstrations did not deter them. Doubtless most flew over as mere sightseers except that they may have had (and would not be disappointed in) their expectations about French food. Their round of incomparable historic and artistic treasures would provide little contact with French people outside the tourist trade.

To historian Theodore Zeldin this is an error which his perceptive and comprehensive study seeks to repair. His procedure was not easy. Some of his personal encounters in different regions of France were inhibited by the sense of privacy the French often manifest toward foreigners, but he manages to present a convincing picture of various men and women in all walks of life. He gives an intriguing account of each individual's attitude toward job, life-styles, sex and marriage, health, education, movies and TV, not to mention the widespread fear of Americanization. The author views the French from many angles with little evidence of their spiritual life. He bolsters many of his general observations with striking statistics.

The French, for all its critical side, is a labor of love for a people Zeldin finds becoming more and more individualistic. As one whose many Parisian visits seldom reached much beyond the noble sights and contacts with local shopkeepers, I encountered in this highly readable book good reasons for always finding the atmosphere of the place so stimulating.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Correspondence

(Continued from page 482)

truth and sincerity that they have so far expressed. I guess driving down the Jersey Turnpike can be a road toward salvation. Thanks to Bruce, rock-and-roll Heaven is being purified!!

(BRO.) STAN KIWOR, C.P.

Ambiguity is strength

Park Ridge, Ill.

To the Editors: Unlike John Garvey ["The Ambiguous Pastoral," May 6], I am not one of "those who will be disappointed in the watered-down draft of the pastoral letter."

Ninety-nine percent of the letter is concerned with means, the end being the avoidance of nuclear war. It would aid the discussion if we could all agree on the premise and debate the means as a matter of judgment.

The principle which all Catholics can accept is that nuclear war is immoral and unacceptable under any circumstances. Having acknowledged the validity of the principle, we can debate the strategy of how best to achieve the goal.

Charles de Gaulle maintained that a nation needed only sufficient nuclear power to inflict devastating retaliation to be able to deter aggression. Our current national policy is based on the assumption that superior nuclear power not only deters physical attack but deters political aggression. This premise is valid only if one assumes that under certain provocative circumstances the superiority will be used as a threat.

And here we get into the area of strategy, and therefore judgment. And judgment is contingent on experience as well as moral rectitude. If one adopts the bishops' position and informs the enemy that under *no* circumstances will we initiate nuclear war we are inviting brinkmanship. It matters not that we would not initiate nuclear war, it is the uncertainty in the minds of the enemy that is a bargaining chip. Perception is reality.

Let us suppose that Russia, with overwhelming conventional military supremacy, attempts to blackmail Germany, by threatening to invade if they do not assent to blackmail. Would they persist if Germany threatened nuclear retaliation if invaded? Would Russia be encouraged if they believed German leadership was committed to the principle of not initiating nuclear war *under any* circumstances? And if Germany did resist with inferior conventional arms, would they not pay a horrible price in many thousands of civilian and military deaths, in the destruction of cities, and in the ride of the four horsemen?

Bishop O'Connor, a practical leader, made a shrewd observation. He speculated that if the U.S.A. knew that Japan had possessed an atomic bomb and the means to deliver it we would not have bombed Hiroshima.

John Garvey's views to the contrary, the ambiguity is a strength for it leaves room for rational disagreement and discussion. In other words, it is not dogmatic.

EDWARD HALPIN

Debt to Congar

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: Thank you for the timely and sensitive essay on Yves Congar by Joseph A. Komonchak [July 15]. Indeed, we all owe Father Congar more than we can say, and to forget our debt would be as unfortunate as to overlook his most recent writing.

Why don't you run a symposium on Congar's *I Believe in the Holy Spirit?* Surely it deserves serious attention culturally as well as theologically.

(REV.) LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J.

A second opinion

Washington, Pa.

To the Editors: When I read Peter Clecak's review of *Lost in the Cosmos* [June 17], it seemed to me odd. But I had not yet read the book. I have now read it, and re-read Clecak's review. It's one of those "did we read the same book" instances, but I'm so amazed at the gap between my own reading of Percy and Clecak's, that I feel I must offer your readers a second opinion.

It seems to me manifestly obtuse to say that "Percy finds no redeeming value in people, politics, culture, or for the most part, religion." He certainly is raging against much in contemporary culture. And I think he hopes for little from politics. But it also seems clear that it is precisely by people and through religion

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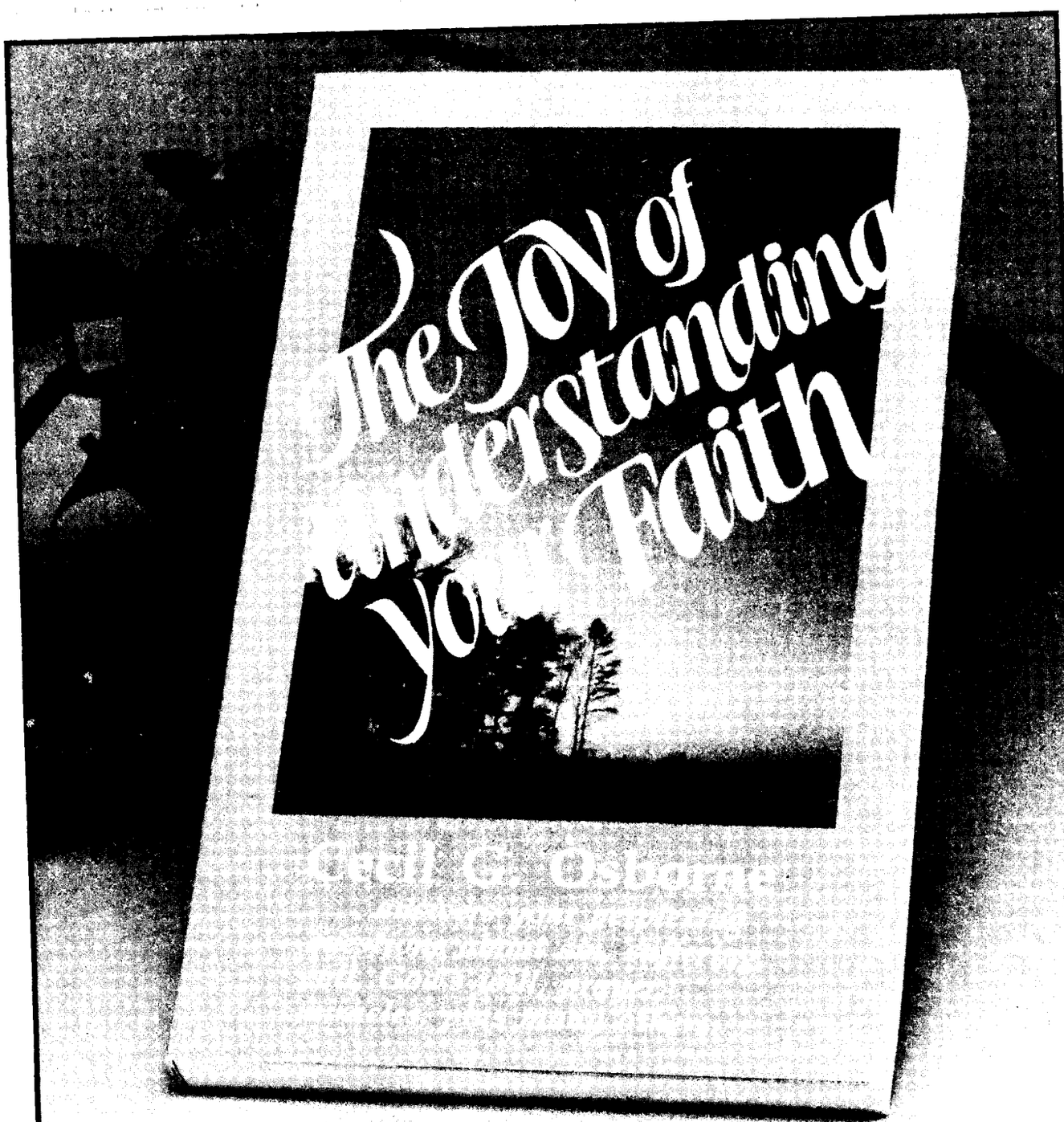

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that he does see redemption or the possibility of it.

Cosmos is not mean-spirited or supercilious. It *is* angry. It is thought-provoking and difficult and experimental. Percy's book does not "dismiss" the "human enterprise," but envisions its reconstitution and regeneration.

Lost in the Cosmos is a splendid book; it gave me great pleasure.

KEITH C. BURRIS

Lift up your eyes!

Newport Beach, Cal.

To the Editors: Coincidentally, I happened upon the July 17th issue of *Commonweal* immediately after reading the July 18th issue of *The New Republic*. I was struck by the stark contrast in cover stories: The Pope in *TNR*, Sister Mary Mansour in *Commonweal*.

The case of Sister Mansour, however interesting, is hardly of earth-shaking importance. Does it really matter, in the real world, just who is the Social Services Director of the State of Michigan? The most renowned journal of American Catholic opinion seems to think so.

TNR, a secular journal, in an issue dated just one day later, sees something else: In the pope's "visitation" to Poland, "the centuries since 1789 seemed suddenly restored to the centuries before it."

It is ironic, if not comic, that at the very moment of highest Catholic impact upon the imagination of twentieth century man, the Catholics don't seem to notice. Where *TNR* finds poetry and an historical sea-change, *Commonweal* is mired in legalisms and banality.

Lift your eyes, *Commonweal*! It is getting to be embarrassing being an American Catholic.

ANN NORMAN

The editors reply: Ms. Norman is not alone in having been pained by Catholics whose interest in intra-church conflicts makes them lose all perspective on the church's role in the world. But she may be a little too quick in projecting her frustration onto others. Whatever the importance of the Mansour story — and we persist in believing it important — the fact remains that this story appeared in the *June* 17 issue of *Commonweal*. In short, it was printed and mailed to subscribers before the pope even left for Poland. If Ms. Norman had been less careless in her reading and less hasty in her judgment, she might have noticed that the *July 15* issue of *Commonweal*, like the parallel issue of *The New Republic*, featured a cover story and a lead editorial on the pope's visit to Poland. We are quite willing to lift our eyes, as Ms. Norman advises; but before she gets any more embarrassed about being an American Catholic, perhaps she should focus her own.

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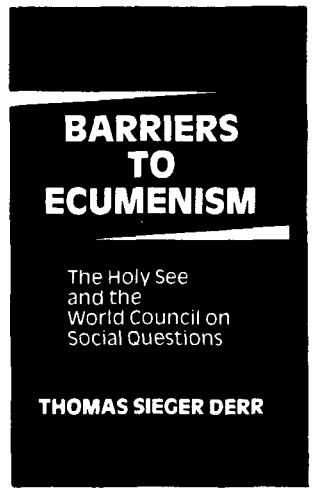

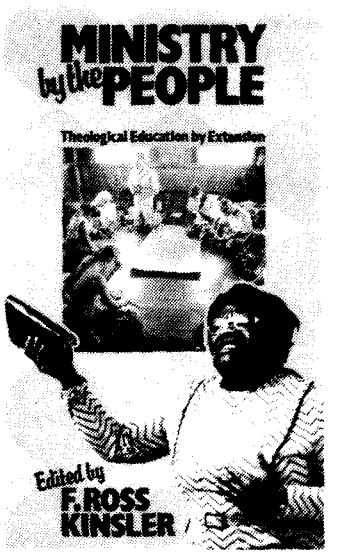

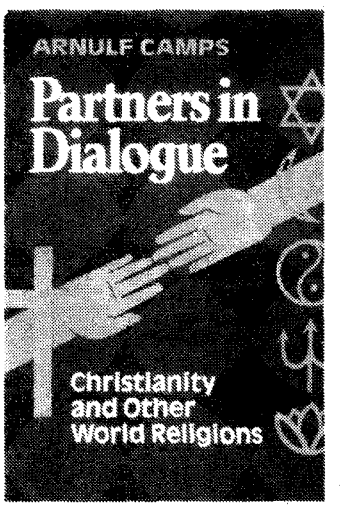

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